the Central Voice

REAL GAY NEWS. WE GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT.

Money, power, chemsex culture and raceplay

PG. 14

COMIC BOOK REVIEW: Sweet action

PG. 12

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Bottom up revolt coming?

State Rep. Brian Sims reflects on Pennsylvania's new legislative session

By Frank Pizzoli

Sims

It's easy to feel optimistic around State Rep. Brian Sims. His enthusiasm warms you up immediately.

When we settled into his office on a busy session day, Sims apologized for drinking his nutritious protein lunch at his desk. And then off we were into the two burning questions *The Central Voice* had for him as the General Assembly begins a new, two-year legislative session.

PA Fairness Act

Will the Keystone State finally pass the PA Fairness Act?

"That could happen," Sims says. "We have a new chairman."

State Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, longtime chair of the State Government Committee and a stridently anti-LGBT elected official, was replaced by State Rep. Garth Everett. Sims is a member of the committee which is the legislative Petri dish in which a statewide LGBT civil rights bill would grow.

Metcalfe has continuously blocked any action on the PA Fairness Act (S.B 613), first introduced in 2015. The bipartisan measure calls for basic LGBT civil rights. A committee chairman can block action on any bill he doesn't like under current rules. Case closed.

Where does new committee chairman Everett stand? Will he ease up on the throttle and allow activity on the act?

"He's not automatically anti-LGBT," Sims says. "I think he'll at least listen to why the act was introduced in the first place. My sense is this is a new day and we have an opportunity to talk about the need for reform

Please see **BOTTOM UP REVOLT**, page **22**

YORK'S YEAR OF QUEER

2019 is shaping up to become a year to celebrate queerness in York.

By Tesla Taliaferro

From social outlets and support groups to a new resource center and campaigns for local queer representatives, there are a variety of services available to help queer individuals and allies flourish freely and find community in York.

Finding community can be quite a challenge in this conservative city, as has been the experience of Tyler Zell, a local transgender man:

"When I first moved to York in 2016, I tried making new friends and met roadblocks at every turn. And when I did meet other queer folk, the age gap was quite significant and we were just at very different places in life. Like every town, I've heard a few hateful comments, but I feel the potential for something greater in the people of York. Now that my life has started to settle down, my wife and I both look forward to becoming an active part of the changing and growing community here."

"...my wife and I both look forward to becoming an active part of the changing and growing community here."

-Tyler Zell

Diversity Recognized

January kicked off with a strong start for queer recognition at the City of York Human Relations Commission's Annual Diversity Event. In addition to continuing the celebration of York City's protection for LGBTQ+ individuals within housing, employment, and accommodations, three local students received the Lewis Atwater Award for championing queer issues in their York area high schools. Amiia Martin of William Penn Senior High, Sabine Harvey of West York High, and Keith White of Central York High have all raised awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and promoted acceptance and diversity within their schools.

Some of these and other local students have grown up with Planned Parenthood's The Curve. Having been around since 2006, The Curve allows queer youth to be themselves and experience the freedom of knowing they are accepted totally and without reservation.

The Curve seeks to support these youth by creating an empowering environment that meets weekly to educate, facilitate support networks, and advocate. Program topics include sexuality education, life skills, and LGBTQ+ history, and features guest speakers, game nights, and activities to promote health, wellness, and a strong sense of belonging within both LGBTQ+ communities and the world.

Spectrum York Forms

Recognizing that support should continue beyond the formative years of youth, but having no outlet by which to provide such, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York's Social Justice Committee

Please see **YEAR OF QUEER,** page **21**

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'Prepare for divine justice', pope warns

Pope Francis has vowed the Catholic church will "never again" cover up clerical sexual abuse and demanded that priests who raped and abused children turn themselves in, according to *The Guardian*. The pontiff dedicated his Christmas speech to the Vatican bureaucracy to the theme of abuse, after a year of revelations of sexual misconduct and cover-ups that rocked his papacy and caused a crisis of confidence in the Catholic hierarchy. He acknowledged the church had not always treated the issue seriously, blaming leaders who out of inexperience or shortsightedness acted "irresponsibly" by refusing to believe victims. But he said the church would never again conceal or dismiss such cases. "Let it be clear that before these abominations, the church will spare no effort to do all that is necessary to bring to justice whosoever has committed such crimes," he said. The pope urged victims to come forward, thanked the media for giving them a voice and issued a stark warning to abusers: "Convert and hand yourself over to human justice, and prepare for divine justice."

HONG KONG

Targeting gay men incompatible with law

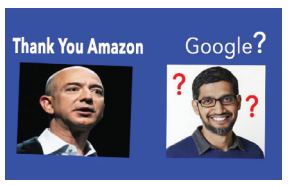
The Hong Kong government recently conceded that seven local laws targeting sexual activities involving gay men were inconsistent with the city's mini-constitution which provides that all residents are equal before the law, reports Jasime Sui for *South China Morning Post*. The seven offences came under scrutiny following a judicial review mounted by Yeung Chu-wing, a volunteer from local sexual minorities rights group, Rainbow Action, who is demanding that the High Court declare them unconstitutional. But while the government conceded the offences were inconsistent with the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, it did not want all seven of them to be declared unconstitutional.

NATIONAL

Point Foundation LGBT Scholarship Fund

Point Foundation considers many factors when assessing scholarship applicants, including: A proven track record of leadership and community involvement; strong academic achievement; working for the betterment of the LGBTQ community; financial need. If selected as a finalist, the finalist must be in North or Central America on April 25-27 and be available to fly to Los Angeles in order to remain eligible for the scholarship. All travel expenses will be covered by Point.
INFO-pointfoundation.org/point-apply/application-faqs

Amazon lauded for eliminating 'Ex-Gay' app



A day after it sent an open letter to the CEO's of Amazon and Google, Truth Wins Out applauded Amazon for removing an "ex-gay" app from its online store. Amazon's commendable move follows Apple's elimination of the app last week, after TWO launched a petition that urged Apple to take action. If one tries to download that app today at Apple or Amazon, created by Arlington, Texas-based Living Hope Ministries, it is no longer available.
Sadly, the app, which targets LGBT youth with destructive messages, portrays homosexuality as an addiction, and says that LGBT people are sick, sinful, and broken, is still available online at Google. TWO Now Calls on Google to Follow Apple, Amazon and Remove 'Ex-Gay' App that Targets LGBT Youth "We are grateful that Amazon supported decency and diversity by eliminating a dangerous 'pray away the gay' app that smears LGBT people with ugly stereotypes and blatant misinformation," said Truth Wins Out Executive Director Wayne Besen. "Amazon displayed laudable corporate accountability by taking a firm stand against a program that we believe bilks consumers and potentially causes considerable damage to the people they claim to help."

Judge rules against lesbians

Bev Nance, 68, and Mary Walsh, 72, were denied an apartment in Missouri's Friendship Village because their marriage is not "understood in the Bible." Tim Fitzsimons reports for NBCNews.com that a federal judge this week ruled against a lesbian couple who sued a Missouri retirement home for rejecting their apartment application because their marriage is not "understood in the Bible." Bev Nance, 68, and Mary Walsh, 72, were married a decade ago in Massachusetts and have been in a committed relationship for roughly 40 years. When they applied to move into the Friendship Village senior living facility, they did so "because it is in their community, they have friends there, and it offers services that would allow them to stay together there for the rest of their lives," said Julie Wilensky, an attorney representing the couple.

The Advocate names first black editor-in-chief

Zach Stafford will start his new role at *The Advocate,* the oldest LGBTQ magazine still in circulation, in late January, reports Alexander Kacala for NBC News.
The Advocate, the nation's oldest gay magazine still in circulation, named Zach Stafford as its new editor-in-chief on Thursday. The award-winning journalist has an established track record of reporting on LGBTQ issues and will make history as the publication's first black editor-in-chief since its debut more than five decades ago. Zach Stafford, the incoming editor-in-chief of *The Advocate*. "Zach is a tenacious and talented risk taker, journalist and editorial leader who will help lead *'The Advocate'* to become the undisputed leader in the LGBTQ community for breaking news and in-depth reporting on the communities we serve" Nathan Coyle, CEO of Pride Media, owner of *The Advocate*, told NBC News in an emailed statement. | Photo by Ivan Padilla

Rose Parade Queen LGBT community member

The LA Blade reports that Louise Siskel of San Marino, California will take a unique place in history when she holds court during the 130th Tournament of Roses Parade on Tuesday, January 1, 2019 in Pasadena. She will be the first LGBTQ community member and the first Jew to preside over the Parade. | *Photo courtesy Rose Parade)*

STATE

PA Resolution: HIV & the Black community

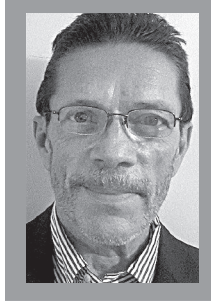
The Pennsylvania House of Representatives declared by Resolution that Feb. 7 was National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in Pennsylvania. According to the National Institutes of Health, in 2016: 17,528 African Americans received an HIV diagnosis in the United States (12,890 men and 4,560 women). More than half (58%, 10,223) of African Americans who received an HIV diagnosis were gay or bisexual men. Among African American gay and bisexual men who received an HIV diagnosis, 39% (3,993) were young men aged 25 to 34. Forty-seven percent (8,501) of those who received an AIDS diagnosis in the United States were African American.

Rally to support trans service members

More than five dozen of community members joined together after work on January 22 to participate in a rally hosted by Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center to support transgender service members. The rally was organized immediately following the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to allow President Trump's unfair, unconstitutional ban on open military service for transgender Americans to stand. The rally was emceed by Atticus Ranck, Health Programs & Supportive Services Manager at Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center and speakers included Rev. Beth Goudy, Pastor of Metropolitan Community Church, Mohan Seshadri, Organizer at Planned Parenthood Keystone, Transgender military veteran Jenn Usher, Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center Executive Director Adrian Shanker, Allentown City Councilwoman Candida Affa, Lehigh County Commissioner Amy Zanelli, and Corinne Goodwin, the facilitator of Renaissance Lehigh Valley, the Transgender social and support group at Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center. The rally was planned with just four hours, and more than five dozen community members attended to stand in support of open service for transgender service members. "Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center will always stand for full legal and social equality for the transgender community. The ban on trans military service harms our country and causes immediate harm to transgender service members. America deserves better." said Adrian Shanker, Executive Director of Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center | *Photo submitted by Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center*

Paying the piper and other politics

Publisher's Voice



By Frank Pizzoli

When I learned that professional Christian and former Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis may have to pay $225,000 for denying gay couples marriages licenses in her capacity as an elected official who swore on the Bible she believes in to uphold the laws of the land, I felt sorry for her.

Not because she spent five days in jail for her refusal to marry five same-sex couples.

Not because she wasn't re-elected when Democrat Elwood Caudill Jr. beat her, a Republican, in the race for Rowan County clerk by 4,210 votes to 3,566 votes.

Not because Davis had the full-throated support of Republican Governor Matt Bevin – until it was time to pay the bill for her lawlessness.

Not because Bevin's attorneys are telling the court that the state shouldn't have to pay for her decision not to do her job.

Not because she is now expected to pay the money herself. I'm certain a GoFundMe campaign will cover the $225,000 in legal bills run up by the five couples to whom she refused service as an elected official because of her religious beliefs.

Not because Kentucky GOP higher ups couldn't get enough of her flimsy bravado until the bill came due.

Not because those same GOP leaders are saying Davis' exhibited "conduct that violates civil rights" as the reason lawsuits were brought and that she acted without state sanction, therefore she should be held responsible. Weasels. I'm thinking the Jesus they believe in was a fair-weather friend.

Not because, as Kentucky Governor Bevin's lawyers are saying, "Her local policy stood in direct conflict with her statutory obligation to issue marriage licenses to qualified Kentucky couples. The local policy also undermined the Commonwealth of Kentucky's interest in upholding the rule of law."

Not because she's now decided to become a preacher. Afterall, would you hire her? How could an employer trust that *her* Jesus didn't have veto power over his Employee Handbook?

Not because, as the court has decided, "Davis had an independent and sworn duty to uphold the law as an elected county officer. If fees are awarded, they must be the responsibility of the Rowan County clerk's office, which should be deterred from engaging in conduct that violates civil rights — and leads to costly litigation."

Not because before there was money involved – that old give to Caesar what is his thing - Governor Bevin called her "an inspiration… to the children of America." And now she's not.

Not because the court ruled "Davis represented the Commonwealth of Kentucky when she refused to issue marriage licenses to legally eligible couples. The buck stops there."

I feel sorry for her because I think she's learning that although her fellow Christians might rally for her in the heat of the moment, once money is involved, they bolt. She's learning the hard way that money talks. Bullshit walks. And she's the bullshit.

She's learning that her fellow GOP Christians excel at talking the talk. They fail at walking the walk. The endless (and boring, tedious) stories of her fellow professional Christians sweaty and red faced as they denounced anything Gay and then end up being exposed as closeted homosexuals shows any thinking adult their talk is different than their walk. They excel at hypocrisy.

Imagine how Davis felt when she learned that former conversion therapy guru and Mormon David Matheson wants to date men. That he regrets practicing the debunked therapy for years.

I feel sorry for her because she's been so fooled and deceived and now ridiculed. And stuck with the bill for everyone else's religious orgy of faith that ultimately failed.

Former Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis's mugshot. Davis was jailed when she refused to marry same-sex couples because of her religious beliefs. She has been ordered to pay $225,000 in legal fees to the five couples.

| ROWAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Kentucky Republican Governor Matt Bevin initially called Davis "an inspiration... to the children of America." But when it came time for Davis to pay her bill, Bevin didn't pick up her tab. The governor's lawyers said Davis's self-imposed policy "... stood in direct conflict with her statutory obligation to issue marriage licenses."

Voice Box

INFORMATIVE

Thank you for the informative article in the latest issue of The Central Voice regarding conversation therapy. While many people may have read or heard of conversion therapy, this article provides information not only about its dangers, but a recent step that Harrisburg City Council has taken to discourage, and later prohibit, its use here.

- Russell Boggs, Chair, Harrisburg Human Relations Commission

EXCELLENT

The Jan-Feb 2019 print issue was excellent. As usual, liked everything you wrote. You are a man who keeps up with so much, and The Central Voice always shows it.

- A reader

Ton of action on the presidential race

As of press time, the following elected officials have filed to run for president with the Federal Election Commission:

- *Cory Booker* (D), U.S. senator from New Jersey
- *Pete Buttigieg* (D), the mayor of South Bend, Indiana
- *Julian Castro* (D), former U.S. secretary of housing and urban development and San Antonio mayor
- *John Delaney* (D), former U.S. representative from Maryland
- *Tulsi Gabbard* (D), U.S. representative from Hawaii
- *Kirsten Gillibrand* (D), U.S. senator from New York
- *Kamala Harris* (D), U.S. senator from California
- *Amy Klobuchar* (D), U.S. senator from Minnesota
- *Donald Trump* (R) filed to run for re-election
- *Elizabeth Warren* (D), U.S. senator from Massachusetts

the Central Voice

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Analysis says Medicare for all reduces overall costs

by Dwight Michael, MD
Healthcare 4 All

The 2018 elections are now complete. Nine percent of Americans still do not have health insurance and 30% more are under-insured, meaning that they cannot afford the health care that they need. There are precious few of us that do not know a friend or loved one who has suffered the consequences.

"A team of economists from the University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) has found that the Medicare for All Act of 2017, introduced to the United States Senate by Senator Bernie Sanders, is not only economically viable, but could actually reduce health consumption expenditures by about 9.6 percent while also providing decent health care coverage for all Americans."

Economist and public policy expert Jeffrey Sachs, University Professor at Columbia University, in reviewing the researchers' analysis, states "This study is the most comprehensive, detailed, authoritative study ever undertaken of Medicare for All, and it points powerfully and unassailably in support of MFA. 'Medicare for All' promises a system that is fairer, more efficient, and vastly less expensive than America's bloated, monopolized, over-priced and under-performing private health insurance system. America spends far more on health care and gets far less for its money than any other high-income country. This study explains why, and shows how Medicare for All offers a proven and wholly workable way forward."

Lead author Robert Pollin, Distinguished Professor in economics at UMass Amherst and co-director of PERI, states in their press release of 11/30/18, "The most fundamental goals of Medicare for All are to significantly improve health care outcomes for everyone living in the United States while also establishing effective cost controls throughout the health care system. These two purposes are both achievable."

The PERI research team concludes that not only is Medicare for All economically viable, it could reduce health care costs by about 9.6% while it provides health care for all those uninsured and under-insured Americans. In 2017, health care expenditures were $3.24 trillion. This was 17% of the gross domestic product (GDP). The average amount spent by other wealthy nations in our world is 40% less while many of these nations produce better health care outcomes for their people. These economists predict a drop from $3.24 to $2.93 trillion annually while providing stable access to health care for all US residents.

We as taxpayers already pay for 60% of total US health care expenses through Medicare and Medicaid taxes. This $1.8 trillion would be used instead to pay for Improved Medicare for All.

The cost remaining would be $1.05 trillion. How is this gap closed?

The PERI research team proposed closing this cost gap for Senator Sanders' SB 1804 with four further revenue streams. Please remember that our current insurance premiums, co-pays, deductibles, and other out-of-pocket costs are eliminated as a result of this bill. Also note that the average cost of health care for a family of four in 2018 was $28,000.

First, businesses would pay an 8% premium of payroll. For businesses already providing health insurance, this would cut their costs from the usual 16-20% of payroll. This would provide $623 billion towards the gap.

Second, there would be a 3.75% sales tax added to non-essentials. Excluded from this tax would be payments for foods and beverages consumed in the home, housing and utility costs, education expenses, and non-profit expenses. This 3.75% sales tax would be credited back to Americans who have Medicaid. This would provide $196 billion.

Third, we would add a net worth tax of 0.38%. The first million of net worth would be exempt. This tax involves the wealthiest 12% of American households. It would provide $193 billion to close the gap.

Fourth, long term capital gains would be taxed as ordinary income. This would contribute $69 billion.

PERI researchers project that middle income America would pay 2.6-14% less of their income towards health care costs as a result of this funding method. The top 20% of income earners may see a 3.7% increase in costs while the top 5% may see a 4.5% increase in costs.

In the first 10 years, they predict that we would see a cumulative savings of $5.1 trillion, 2.1% of cumulative GDP.

These experts also conclude that we would see broader macroeconomic benefits with increased productivity of our workforce, greater income equality, and net job creation due to reduced operating costs for small and medium-sized businesses.

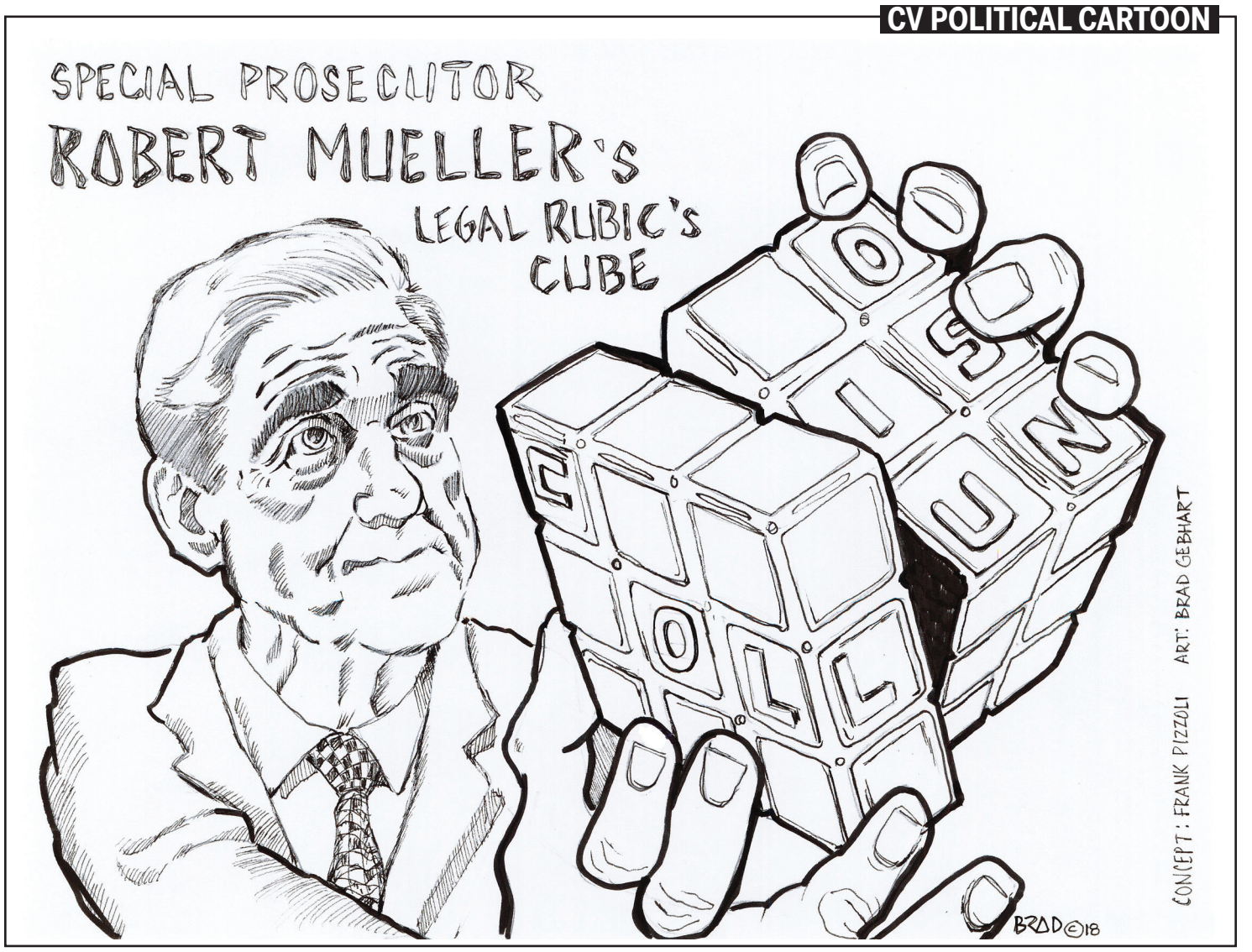
In short, most businesses and families would see lower costs.

Because the cost of health care is already expensive and unaffordable for many, this problem is not going to go away. The opposition is very strong. There is tremendous power in the money of the private health insurance industry, the pharmaceutical industry, and other health care parties that believe they will be injured by our country's transition to" Improved Medicare for All". These moneyed interests have again formed an alliance, now called "the Partnership for America's Health Care Future". Their mission is to maintain the status quo that serves them so well. They have tested which phrases scare and convince key legislators and voters of their legislative districts. This alliance wants these key legislators to defeat any advance towards "Improved Medicare for All".

Those of us who believe health care should be a human right need to speak out to our friends, families, and legislators. Remind them that nearly all (if not all) other industrialized nations in the world provide universal health care for their people. We must pressure our state and national legislators with phone calls, letters, and emails. We need to inform them that we know that not only is "Improved Medicare for All" the most just solution, it is the best solution to provide affordable, accessible, high quality health care for all Americans. Join the movement!

Dr. Michael is a HealthCare for All PA Board Member.

CV POLITICAL CARTOON



Please see **MARIJUANA**, page **20**

Please see **SCOTT**, page **21**

Gay men are increasingly voting for anti-LGBTQ right-wingers, says new international study

By Daniel Villarreal

In the 2018 U.S. midterm elections, 82% of LGBTQ voters voted for Democrats, America's more pro-LGBTQ political party. But in many other Western countries "right-wing and virulently homophobic parties enjoy considerable support among gay voters," says Samuel Huneke, a gay historian at Stanford University who studies modern European culture.

Huneke looked at voting data from 14 elections in five Western countries — the US, UK, France, Germany and Brazil — and then published a recent article on the troubling phenomenon. It it, Huneke observed:

LGBT voters in other [non-U.S.] countries were less likely to support the conservative (or in some cases far-right) party by an average of only seven percent. And when you look only at gay men, the results are even more striking. In other countries, gay men were, on average, more likely than the general electorate to support the conservative or far-right party.

For example, a 2015 French poll showed 26% of gay and bisexual male voters supporting Marine Le Pen, the anti-gay politician with the far-right National Front party — only 16% of straight voters supported Le Pen. That same year, 38% of gay male couples voted for Le Pen's party whereas only 29% of straight couples did the same.

Huneke notes that in France and Brazil's run-off presidential elections, the far-right politicians in each of those two-person races each received a substantial fraction of the gay male vote. In the UK, 26% of LGBTQ voters supported the Conservative Party.

Huneke states that the polling around this issue is slim, and so we can't draw overarching conclusions. For example, in Germany, Huneke admits the picture is hazier: Only 2.7% of LGBTQ voters supported Germany's far-right, homophobic party Alternative for Germany (AfD).

But even still, Huneke thinks that when gay men are studied as an individual group, substantial numbers of them vote right-ward. He says this isn't true in America where the GOP's longstanding opposition to HIV-related healthcare, marriage equality and other LGBTQ civil rights have driven majorities of gay voters into the Democratic tent.

But in other Western countries lacking the same two-party system of villains and heroes, the gay vote doesn't always lean liberal.

"Gay politics in other countries prove that LGBT people — especially gay men — are not inherently progressive voters. Give them the chance and they will vote for xenophobia, for racism, and for misogyny. Democrats (and progressive parties in other countries, for that matter) cannot and must not take the gay vote for granted," Huneke concludes.

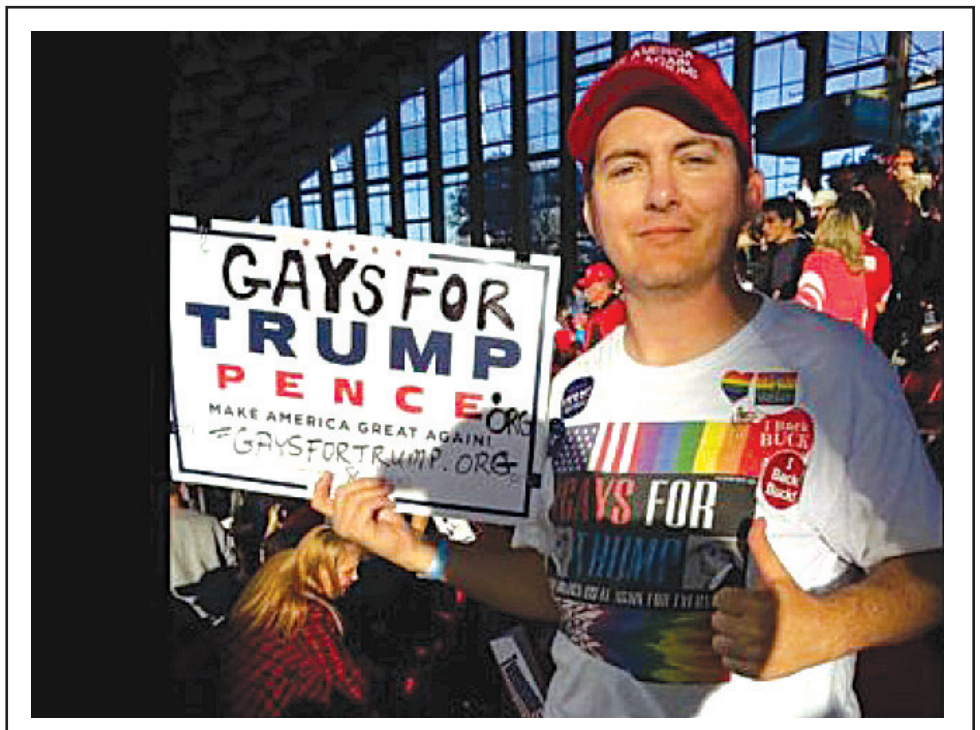
Party or Candidate (Country)	Level of Support	Poll Year	Source of Support	General Electorate Support	Difference
Marine Le Pen (France)	26.0%	2015	Gay, Lesbian, and Bi	16.0%	10.0%
National Front (France)	38.0%	2015	Gay Couples	29.0%	9.0%
Alternative for Germany (Germany)	17.0%	2016	Gay	12.6%	4.4%
Marine Le Pen (France)	36.5%	2017	Gay	33.9%	2.6%
Alternative for Germany (Germany)	12.0%	2017	Gay	12.6%	-0.6%
Conservative Party (UK)	38.0%	2009	Gay	41.0%	-3.0%
Alternative for Germany (Germany)	7.0%	2016	Gay and Lesbian	14.2%	-7.2%
Alternative for Germany (Germany)	2.7%	2017	LGBT	12.6%	-9.9%
Conservative Party (UK)	26.0%	2015	LGBT	36.9%	-10.9%
Jair Bolsonaro (Brazil)	29.0%	2018	LGBT	46.0%	-17.0%
Republian Party (U.S.)	22.0%	2012	LGBT	47.2%	-25.2%
Republican Party (U.S.)	24.0%	2014	LGBT	51.2%	-27.2%
Republican Party (U.S.)	17.0%	2018	LGBT	45.2%	-28.2%
Republican Party (U.S.)	14.0%	2016	LGBT	46.2%	-32.2%

U.S. LGBT Difference	-28.2%
LGBT Difference in Other Countries	-7.0%
Gay Male Difference in Other Countries	2.5%

In this chart posted by Huneke, the second column shows the percentage of gay or LGBTQ support for various right-wing parties. The right-most column shows whether gays and LGBTQ people supported these candidates more often (green) or less often (red) than straight voters.

CHART SOURCE: LA REVIEW OF BOOKS

U.S. LGBTQ voters voted overwhelmingly for Democrats in the mid-term elections but in many other Western countries right-wing and homophobic parties enjoy considerable support among gay voters.



Gays for Trump founder Peter Boykin defends Trump's record on LGBTQ issues. | FACEBOOK

The founder of 'Gays for Trump' trounced in his North Carolina election

The founder of North Carolina's "Gays for Trump," Peter Boykin (R), lost his bid for the North Carolina House to Amos Quick (D) reported Alex Bollinger on nov. 7, 2018 for LGBTQ Nation.

Quick, the incumbent, got 76% of the vote.

Boykin has gotten attention over the past few years for his ardent support of Donald Trump. He spent 2016 raising funds to get "Gays for Trump" billboards up in Florida and North Carolina.

Earlier this year, he was in the headlines for organizing a "March4Trump" in D.C. About 100 people attended, there was an "open mic" instead of scheduled speakers, and Boykin blamed the wind – yes, the wind – for the lack of attendance.

After he announced his candidacy, he did a couple of interviews where he defended Trump's record on LGBTQ issues: he said that transgender people shouldn't be in the military because they have a "mental disorder" and that Trump "is probably still friends with Caitlyn Jenner."

Boykin posted a concession message to Twitter.

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Conference draws 800 from 50 states, 7 provinces

Trans Central PA Topics

By Joanne Carroll

Every year around now, I have written to tell you about the forthcoming Keystone Conference, and this year is no exception because it is an important event for the Susquehanna Valley area.

It is important for several reasons, primarily because it provides so very many transgender persons a moment in time when the authenticity of life is experienced. Secondly, because of the economic impact of up to a half million dollars.

The Eleventh Annual Keystone Conference will commence on March 20-24, 2019, at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey. With a theme of is "A Celebration of Gender Diversity", the Keystone Conference is hosted annually by TransCentralPA in Pennsylvania's capital city of Harrisburg.

As the keystone bridges and holds together associated entities, Trans-identifying people do the same, and the Keystone Conference is a celebration of the unique diversity of gender and our central and unifying place in society.

As the keystone bridges and holds together associated entities, Trans-identifying people do the same...

Pennsylvania is known as the Keystone State because of its significance in unifying the early colonies, and it is quite relevant that we hold this conference here in the state's capital, ideally located within an easy drive from six major east coast cities. William Penn had a vision that his "Penn's Woods" could be a place of personal and religious freedom and a place of unrestricted welcome; and that is certainly how the Keystone Conference would choose to be remembered. This conference allows members, allies, supporters, spouses, service providers and friends of the Transgender Community to come together for an informative, inspirational and joyous experience. Here, friendships are forged and renewed in a safe place.

The city of Harrisburg has proven to be a welcoming and friendly place, and has provided conferees the perfect environment to experience life in the open. Several events allow convention attendees to dine and dance in a number of well-known eateries in downtown Harrisburg.

The event, headquartered at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel on Lindle Road, features nationally known persons as speakers or seminar presenters from within the transgender community and beyond.

Continuing education units are available to licensed social workers [LCW is an actual rating], professional counselors and marriage therapists. Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research provides certification.

The conference began small and was originally intended as an educational opportunity for the trans-identifying residents of Southeastern Pennsylvania. When its existence became known, the reach has expanded beyond anything TransCentralPA could have envisioned.

For the past ten years, growth has been exponential, and the Keystone Conference is easily the second largest, if not the largest conference of its kind in all of North America and the world with its annual attendance has growing to nearly 800 attendees

The majority of conferees come from each of the Northeastern States and Eastern Canada. Most often every one of the 50 states and 7 provinces are represented, and in the past several years, the conference has become international in scope, with registered attendees from Israel, Belgium, Spain, England, Ireland, South Africa, Australia and several South American countries.

This year with an expanded capacity web presence, inquiries have come from nearly 115,000 people and from over 162 countries. With this level of interest, the Keystone Conference promises to grow once again.

TransCentralPA is a federally and Commonwealth recognized 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to serving the transgender community in and around Central Pennsylvania.

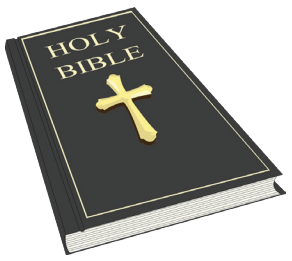
Membership is open to all transgender individuals, their Significant Others and to other persons who have a personal or professional interest in a transgender person or in gender behavior or theory in general. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian (proof is required under Pennsylvania Law). Monthly meetings are open to everyone. For more information, visit www.TransCentralPA.org.

Joanne Carroll is the former President of TransCentral PA. TransCentral PA is committed to providing advocacy and caring support for transgender individuals, their significant others, families, friends and allies.

WACKO WATCH:
What are the homophobes up to now?

Texas conservatives claim LGBTQ equality bill bans the Bible and Christianity

By Zack Ford, Think Progress



The Texas legislature reconvened this month and Democratic lawmakers immediately introduced a variety of bills that would advance LGBTQ equality in the state. Conservative leaders are fiercely opposed to the legislation and have turned to a new messaging strategy to defend their ability to discriminate.

According to Texas Values, a state conservative advocacy group, every one of the pro-LGBTQ bills, which likely won't gain any momentum, "[ban] the Bible." The group has even set up the site NoBibleBan.com to redirect to an advocacy page, which declares that the LGBTQ equality bills "would attack people of faith so viciously, we can justifiably describe them as #BanTheBible bills," and which allows visitors to sign up to receive updates on the movement or email their elected officials.

Texas Values' president, Jonathan Saenz, has also been dutifully tweeting and retweeting on the hashtag "#BanTheBible" daily.

The bills Saenz objects to would ban anti-LGBTQ discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations; protect LGBTQ youth from conversion therapy, and make it easier for transgender people to update their birth certificates. None of them mentions the Bible.

Conservative commentator Erick Erickson chimed in this week, posting a blog in which he claimed the bills would "ban Christianity in all but name."

Vice President Pence's wife works for a Christian school that bans LGBT people

Karen Pence, the wife of Mike Pence, has accepted a part-time job teaching art a school that explicitly discriminates against LGBT people, according to Alex Bollinger, LGBTQ Nation.

The Immanuel Christian School in Virginia requires people applying for work to state that they are a "born again" Christian.

At the end of the application, they must initial next to a list of "standards of behavior."

One of them is "moral purity," which, here, only refers to sexual purity.

"I understand that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning; the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant union as delineated in Scripture," the application says.

"Moral misconduct which violates the bona fide occupational qualifications for employees includes, but is not limited to, such behaviors as the following: heterosexual activity outside of marriage (e.g., premarital sex, cohabitation, extramarital sex), homosexual or lesbian sexual activity, polygamy, transgender identity, any other violation of the unique roles of male and female, sexual harassment, use or viewing of pornographic material or websites, and sexual abuse or improprieties toward minors as defined by Scripture and federal or state law."

Fortunately for Pence, the application does not mention divorce at all, since she is currently in her second marriage.

The document also requires applicants to list their "Christian Experience" along with their education and professional experiences.

They have to answer several short answer questions, like "Explain when and how you came to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and describe your relationship with Christ today" and "Explain your view of the creation/evolution debate."

In the Parent Agreement, parents must refrain from "participating in, supporting, or condoning sexual immorality, homosexual activity or bi-sexual activity, promoting such practices, or being unable to support the moral principles of the school."

According to George Washington Law School professor Robert Tuttle, the school is legally allowed to engage in such discrimination.

A spokesperson for Pence said, "It's absurd that her decision to teach art to children at a Christian school, and the school's religious beliefs, are under attack."

"The Pences never seem to miss an opportunity to show their public service only extends to some," HRC's JoDee Winterhof said. | OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

Imprisoned, anti-gay Oklahoma senator to pay $125,000 to teen male prostitute

Remember Ralph Shortey? He's the former Oklahoma State senator and Trump campaign chair who, despite having and supporting anti-LGBTQ legislation, was arrested in 2017 for hooking up and smoking weed with a 17-year-old male sex worker, according to LGBTQ Nation.

It turns out that in addition to serving 15 years in prison, Shortey has to pay over $125,000 in restitution to the teen boy he slept with. Though Oklahoma's age of consent is 16, the state's child sex work statute applies to any person under 18.

It's unclear whether Shortey and the teen actually had sex, but they were found in a Motel 8 hotel room with lotion and condoms, so…. Video of Shortey's arrest showed him wearing a shirt with a Bible verse about women submitting to their husbands, along with a drawing of a sandwich and the words, "now make me a sandwich."

The restitution money is meant to pay for the young man's psychological treatment for any trauma and victimization he experienced with Shortey. Since Shortey's currently in the slammer earning very little money, he'll have to pay back most of the money after he leaves prison and no, he can't appeal.

This money is just the latest log tossed onto Shortey's bonfire of well-deserved humiliation. Shortly after the then 35-year-old senator's arrest, Senate workers scraped his name from his office door, changed the locks and painted over his name in the Senate parking lot. He also lost all most of his senatorial positions and perks. He resigned six days later.

He originally faced child pornography charges for receiving explicit images of the teen boy, but prosecutors later dropped those charges. His wife then divorced him in 2018. A judge later refused to let him spend time with his four home-schooled daughters, and his wife reportedly changed her and her daughters' last names.

During his seven years in the state Senate, Shortey built a name for himself by pushing bills targeting those living in the country illegally and expanding gun rights. He routinely voted with his Republican colleagues on bills targeting gay and transgender people, including an approved measure allowing business owners to discriminate against gay people.

In 2012 Shortey introduced a bill banning the use of fetuses in food preparation.

"There are companies that are using embryonic stem cells to research and basically cause a chemical reaction to determine whether or not something tastes good or not," Shortey told *The Oklahoman*. No evidence of this practice was found, to which Shortey responded, "They're not going to admit to it because it's a public-relations nightmare."

Police detain armed Trump supporter after protesting drag queen storytime

James "Doc" Greene Sr. was detained by police after barging into a Houston library to protest a scheduled drag queen storytime for children reports *OutSmart Magazine*. Greene has previously been banned from the library for similar antics – including filming children without permission.

Greene had a concealed weapon and was disarmed by officers.

A spokesperson for the Houston Police Department told OutSmart Magazine that Greene entered the building about 15 minutes before the program was to being. Police were called when he refused to leave.

"A manager asked us for assistance because [Greene] was banned from the library, and would not leave when he was asked," Silva says. "He was previously banned for filming children at the library, and has been known to cause disturbances. Several officers had to escort him out."

Greene refused to cooperate with officers and was taken to a hospital after complaining of chest pains. He filmed the encounter and posted video to YouTube.

"We have a bunch of homosexuals that are molesting children," Greene said after being escorted out of the building. "They are doing it with your help."

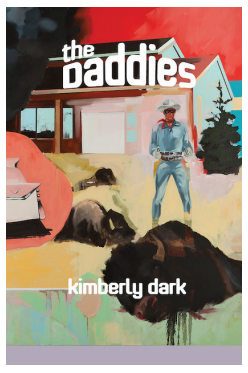
While the YouTube video cuts off shortly after, Greene continued filming, using Facebook to document the encounter.

The District Attorney declined to press charges. Police released him to the custody of the hospital.

Kimberly Dark wants to know:

Who's your daddy?

By Frank Pizzoli



Writer and raconteur Kimberly Dark plucks the fig leaf off the patriarchy.

In *The Daddies*, writer and raconteur Dark excavates layers of man culture and custom that have saturated everyday life. As the *NY Times* noted "The so-called 'dad style' that has been adopted by all genders in recent years, it seems we've reached peak 'daddy'."

Dark's allegory about patriarchy is told as a kinky lesbian daddy/girl love story filled with grief and social critique that will have readers exclaiming, "Oh, so this is why so many women, and an estimated 20-25% of cisgender gay men and lesbians, voted for Donald Trump!" *(See p. XX - Gay men are increasingly voting for anti-LGBTQ right-wingers, says new study)*

The story humorously follows a breakup between two adult lovers. However, the metanarrative is about our cultural need to break up the patriarchy, while still holding on to love for our fathers, sons and masculinity itself, Dark says. Daddy-ness now resides in all of us, she contends. And inasmuch as there are positive and negative aspects of the word used affectionately by children, and lustfully by gay men, lesbians and straight women, we all have a responsibility for creating a fairer world. To dissolve the negative aspects of "daddy" while encouraging affirmative love and care-taking.

Windy City Times: Why publish a book at this time with this theme?

Kimberly Dark: I've published short essays on my incest experiences with my father and from that broadened my thoughts to the larger culture. The #MeToo movement has certainly opened a public dialogue on historical privileges granted men. The patriarchy is under scrutiny.

WCT: Hopefully we all listen more attentively to the "lived experiences" of others – women, people of color, non-heterosexual folks.

KD: Exactly. After sharing in print my incestuous relationship, I began turning over more cultural rocks. And under so many there are manifestations of "daddy".

WCT: Hiding in plain sight?

KD: Well, yes. We've become so used to the social narrative we don't even question the patriarchy. Until now, of course. Certainly, there have been others in our history who have asked the tough questions, but not with an Internet to get out the word.

WCT: So, it may not be politically incorrect to ask, as I have, What is the value of women serving in the military, and now under certain conditions, in combat? Why is that progress if they join forces with the patriarchy?

KD: I think you're asking the right question in the right way. We need to look at "mission". What's the end game? What are both men and women – straight, queer, whatever - doing with the resources, privileges, and each other? Can we, do we want to dissolve the negative aspects and daddy-ness and retain and encourage affirmative love and care-taking.

WCT: So, if a female, or anyone, of any sexual identity and/or race busts through the glass ceiling of a bank and joins her male colleagues of any sexual identity, or race, in denying loans to economically depressed others, she's improved her life but not necessarily anyone else's? She's a daddy who can reward or withhold?

KD: Yes, that's it. All aspects of our lives are now framed by "daddy". We see it in business, advertising, the military, that's what colonialism was/is.

WCT: It's seems we live in a No Nuance world blended with Fire-Ready-Aim media. Is it wrong to ask if there must be more to LGBT civil rights than marriage and military service? Coincidentally, national queer organizations saw a quick 20-25% drop in contributions upon the U.S. Supreme Court's marriage equality decision. I wonder if the queer Trump vote and these contributors are the same people.

KD: That's the larger question. What do we sacrifice when the patriarchy allows us a place at the table? What if you don't aspire to be heteronormative?

WCT: So, through your lesbian daddy/girl love story, not quite a heteronormative relationship, you tell a tale that weaves these broader themes into a narrative?

All aspects of our lives are now framed by "daddy". We see it in business, advertising, the military, that's what colonialism was/is.

KD: That's why I wrote in a hybrid narrative form, magical realism, with pop culture analysis.

WCT: Your thesis is a literary centipede. You needed many legs to move the story along?

KD: I did. And some sections were previously published as essays. When it all came together for me, I figured a way to tell a story but one that I could generalize to readers in a way they could think about their own experiences.

WCT: In that creative process, what surprises or deeper wisdoms did you conjure?

KD: I thought about what happens when you're involved with someone kind of scary and you just can't break up.

WCT: I'm certain many readers can relate to that scenario.

KD: Sure. Dominance and submission are often enjoyed in a relationship but may not be the singular nature of a couple's bond.

WCT: Your character's relationship is the micro version of your larger, macro story about 'daddy-ness'?

KD: Yes. And within my characters' relationship a reader can see themselves and also the larger picture of society. That's what makes my book a political allegory.

WCT: Let's explore both sides of that. Start with the characters.

KD: We make value judgments about the roles we're asked to take in relationships. And I don't mean only sexual roles. I mean someone's overall posture when coupled. My characters act consensually, although some moments are dark as they evolve.

WCT: Do they learn about themselves in the process?

KD: They do. Yoga is the perfect analogy. Certain poses are demanding and when practiced you submit to the demands of the position. You adjust, learn, and your body incorporates the experience.

WCT: Like saying It hurts so good? But must we ask ourselves if that hurt is beneficial, growth producing in the long run, or simply abuse?

KD: That's right. That's why we need to make our own value judgments about what's being asked of us in a relationship vis-à-vis daddy-ness. Control doesn't always please nor is it always helpful or healthy.

WCT: Nothing eliminates a reader's responsibility to think things through and decide?

KD: I hope that's what the book points out. On the micro level of the relationship and the macro level of patriarchal culture.

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Escape to the images of Wanderlust

The Art Association of Harrisburg will exhibit Wanderlust, a solo exhibition featuring photographs by Billy Hicks until March 28.

While some may consider Hicks' work travel photography - and they would not be entirely wrong for that - Hicks' body of work brings a quality that far exceeds the boundaries of pure documentation. At the core of travel photography, the images allow the viewer to mentally and emotionally escape, to immerse themselves in a new experience, land or lifestyle. Hicks' effortlessly gifts this escape to the viewer in his various series from Asia, Europe, South America, the Caribbean, and even night scenes of the sky.

However, the magic of his photographs are found in Hicks' ability to not simply visually translate a new experience, but rather, make the viewer feel as though these photographs are his/her own journey. The color palette, compositions, and play between public and intimate depth of field, gives the viewer the sense that these images are somehow his/her own memories. In effect this causes the viewer to escape twice over: first, to a new land; and second, into the metaphorical shoes of Hicks himself.

Hicks said, "I'm not always great with words, so this show is a way for me to tell the stories about my travels around the world through the photographs I've captured. The phrase "Wanderlust" means a strong desire or need to explore, and over the past five years it has really come to define my existence.

"The photos in this show are meant to tell the stories of people I've met, places I've experienced, and nights I've spent gazing up at the infinite stars in the sky.

"Half of this show will consist of photos from my backpacking journeys overseas; months away from home trekking

through Asia, Europe, South America and the Caribbean. The other half will consist of more local and familiar journeys that take place in the dead of night when the world transforms into a different place, and lights and colors take on a life of their own.

"Each photograph is meant to serve as an escape - to take the viewer on an adventure into our very beautiful world, as seen through my eyes."

"The photos in this show are meant to tell the stories of people I've met, places I've experienced, and nights I've spent gazing up at the infinite stars in the sky."

-Billy Hicks

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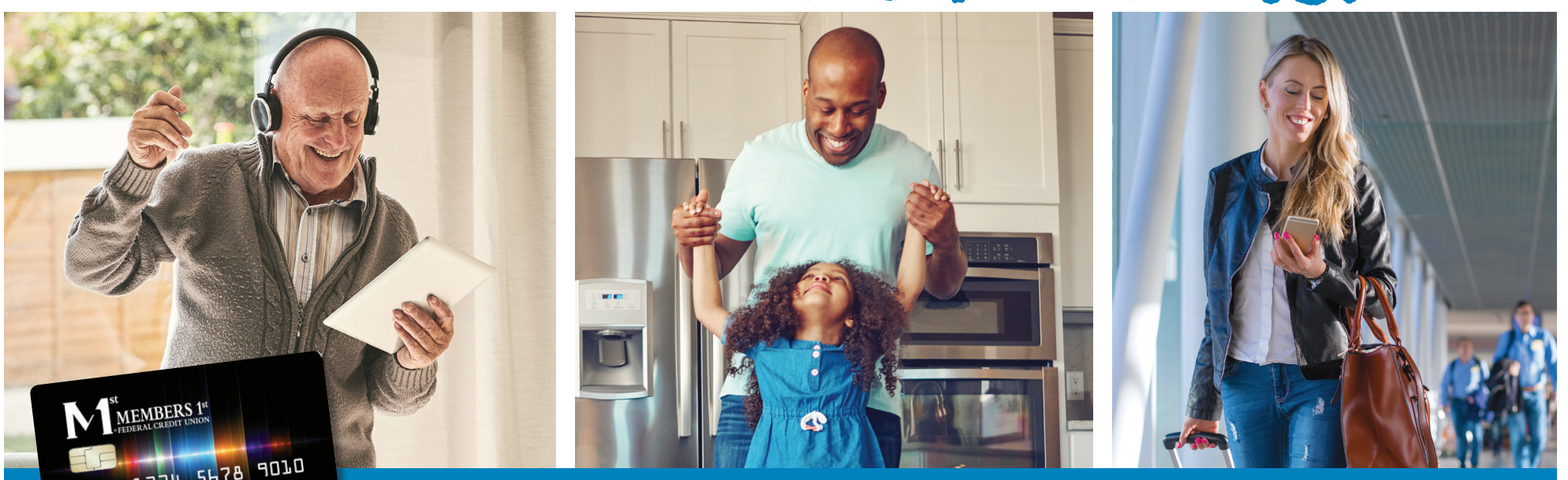

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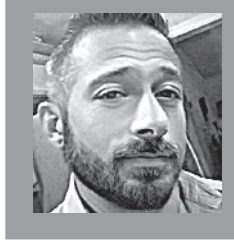
Shatterstar #2 is 'sweet action'

Comic Watch



By Nicolas Duncan

Editor's Note: The Central Voice welcomes Comics Watch writer Nicolas Duncan to our pages.

REVIEW

Author(s): Tim Seeley
Artist(s): Carlos Villa, Juan Vlasco, Gerardo Sandoval
Colorist(s): Carlos Lopez
Letterer: Cory Petit
Publisher: Marvel
Genre: Sci-Fi, Space, Super Hero
Published Date: 11/07/2018

A connection to a character is often a reason for a reader to choose a comic book. As fans of superheroes, we can escape from everyday life and then eventually be inspired to deal with our own reality. Connections to superheroes, like Shatterstar, may guide the reader how to overcome negative social behaviors and learn how to be better by embracing the unfamiliar. As a fan of LGBTQ+, or "queer" as Generation Z embraces, I was ecstatic when Shatterstar's solo miniseries was announced. Last issue was "OK", but quite concerned with people dropping this title. However, the beginning of the second issue, Tim Seeley shows us that he understands what it takes to keep people "entertained" and "fully invested".

Shatterstar #2 takes us to a brand new place in the multiverse. Horus IV is a world similar to Mojoword that is built on blood bath entertainment. The Grandmaster on this world knows that the people want much more than just action. They desire more meaning with higher stakes. It seems that Seeley is talking directly to us as the reader who may be questioning this storyline.

As the story begins, the Grandmaster strategically aligns his victims to move his two predominant chess pieces, Shatterstar and Gringrave. Last issue, we learned that Gringrave is an ex-lover from Shatterstar's past on Mojoworld. The Grandmaster uses this knowledge to move this chess piece as the Death Sponsors seize Ben Gaveedra, aka Shatterstar's tenants for the purpose to move his other major piece in this game of Horus IV. Check and the danger have only begun!

Whether Shatterstar wants to admit it or not, he needs help from his former teammate and ex-lover, Julio "Rictor" Richter. Used as an "anchor", Rictor uses his powers with Shatterstar and catches up with the Death Sponsors. The duo dives from the rip in space produced by Shatterstar's blades and battles hard, but are unable to stop save the tenants yet as they are forced into another portal. Though they make an amazing team, but Shatterstar has some emotional demons to attend to in his own way. He cannot risk the life of Rictor, the man he loves, as the mission takes Shatterstar to Horus IV to defend, fight, and bring his tenants back home. "Check" by the Grandmaster once again, as Shatterstar rip space by his swords and forces Rictor away from the danger.

Seeley did a good job with the interactions between Shatterstar and Rictor, but their relationship status is still undecided and challenging for both. Their conversations carries weight of an on and off again years-long romance. Unfortunately, much of Shatterstar's feelings for Rictor are told through too much awkward narration. Like we see in other comic books, TV shows, and of course real life; Shatterstar is a character who pushes the one he loves away as things get too serious.

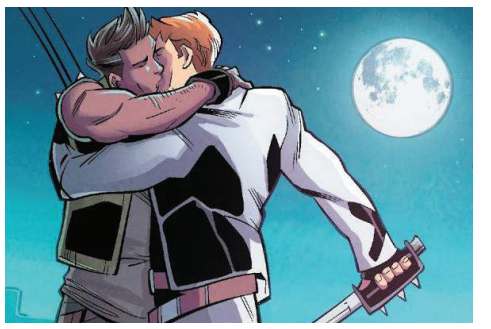
Seeley's unique style of storytelling provided a great psychological stand point during the flashbacks to Shatterstar's relationship with a woman on Mojoworld. As things got too steamy between Shatterstar and Gringrave, she immediate put on the breaks and pushed him away. This is a very basic and common defense mechanism. As the relationship develops, people often become inundated with their own fears and insecurities that they will not be accepted and therefore hurt by their loved one. So the cunning and self-deprecating thing to do is to hurt them before they hurt you. This is the lesson Shatterstar learned and therefor explains the on and off again relationship with Rictor. Shatterstar consistently throw roadblocks into the relations ship and may not even consciously realize it as he is caught up in a cycle of diminished self-esteem that crates the ego factor in their relationship.

Seeley provided some good tidbits for those who may be unfamiliar with Shatterstar and Rictor. Actually, there may have been too much narration in general for this issue. Referring to Rictor on page 9, I found "He believed he owed the X-Men for saving him all thos years ago". I would assume that Seeley is referencing X-Factor Vol. 1 #17 and #18. However, I feel a little conflicted. Maybe, Seeley was referring to X-Factor #20 or maybe, Avengers: The Children's Crusade. All that I can say, Seeley has prompted me to reread some of my favorite X-Factor stories!

Shatterstar #2 employs several more flashback sequences than the previous issue. Gerardo Sandoval's reddish-brown tinted panels feel very '90s, which worked as it reminds us how Mojoworld used to be drawn. However, I have a huge problem with the artwork on Gringrave as she looks different in various panels. After reading Shatterstar #1, I expected her to be Asian-American. In the flashback panels in the beginning of this issue, she looks to be African-American. Then in present day, she looks more American with combat skills. It's just confusing and a continuity issue that bothers me to no end. Aside from that, I really enjoyed the art during the fight scenes. I found it mesmerizing at times.

I often find comic books with meaning and an emotional core hit home the most. The storyline and art really does need to mean something. Shatterstar #2 embodies that message. I want to see more of the central relationship between Shatterstar and Rictor, however, the denouement suggests that chapter is closed, at least for now. Wherever this creative team takes us next, I hope to learn more about this space-splitting mutant and his complicated friendships.

Until the next issue, I leave you with a kiss.



Final Thoughts

Shatterstar #2 is enjoyable and we get some sweet action, fantastic flashbacks, and an explanation to the relationship status quo.

Shatterstar #2 is reprinted here with permission from Comic Watch: The Age of Comic and Entertainment

Who is Nicolas Duncan?

In his own words, Nicolas Duncan tells readers why he loves comics.

For me, comics have demonstrated a form of communication that marries the linear sequence of typography with the global perception of an internet-like matrix of simultaneous parts. I enjoy expressing the "why" comic books are important for all people. Earth is a diverse place and so are comic books.

Over 40 years now, as a collector, I have immersed myself in the comic book culture and attend conventions to learn new trends in the field. On the professional stand point, I have experiences in handling legal affairs and creative marketing planning, and many other necessary skills to run a comic book retail store. Recently, I have been writing comic book reviews for Comic Watch: The Age of Comic and Entertainment and writing two comic book titles of my own.

Comic books spark the imagination through scientific curiosity and sociological achievement, promotes educational tidbits, tackle different types of discrimination and much more that appeals to the reader's interests.

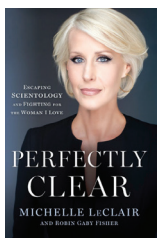
Relationship reading

As spring approaches, select from one or more of these titles that range from the practical to informational, from inspiring to thought provoking. Remember, the Dauphin County Library System has even more titles that are sure to spark your interest. Find out more be either visiting us in person or online at www.dcls.org.

Dauphin County Library Book Reviews

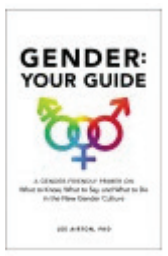
By Yvonne Carmichael

Perfectly Clear: Escaping Scientology and Fighting for the Woman I Love by Michelle LeClair and Robin Gaby Fisher



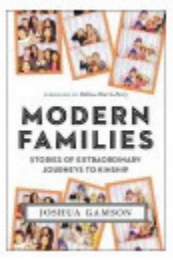
"There is nothing as powerful as a mother's love, and nothing as healing as a child's soul." *Unknown* said the best things. But what Michelle LeClair told *The Central Voice* about her and her mother's ordeal with The Church of Scientology is even better. In her tell-all memoir, *Perfectly Clear, Escaping Scientology and Fighting for the Woman I Love,* LeClair offers an insider's perspective on Scientology's pervasive influence, secret rituals, and ruthless practices for keeping members in line. It's a story of self-acceptance, of finding the strength and courage to stand up for your emotional freedom, and of love prevailing. Eventually, LeClair finds the love of her life, a woman, and ultimately leaves the church. But the split comes at a terrible price. Her once pristine reputation is publicly dragged through the mud, the police raid her home, her ex-husband tries to gain full custody of their children, and the multi-million-dollar business she built from scratch is utterly destroyed." (From *The Central Voice*)

Gender: Your Guide: A Gender-Friendly Primer on What to Know, What to Say, and What to Do in the New Gender Culture by Lee Airton.



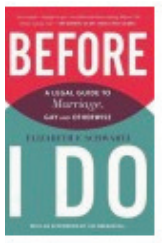
"The days of two genders--male, female; boy, girl; blue, pink--are over, if they ever existed at all. Gender is now a global conversation, and one that is constantly evolving. From the differences among gender identity, gender expression, and sex, to the use of gender-neutral pronouns like singular they/them, to thinking about your own participation in gender, *Gender: Your Guide* serves as a complete primer to all things gender. You will learn how gender works in everyday life, how to use accurate terminology to refer to transgender, non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming individuals, and how to ask when you aren›t sure what to do or say." (From the Publisher)

Modern Familes: Stories of Extraordinary Journeys to Kinship by Joshua Gamson.



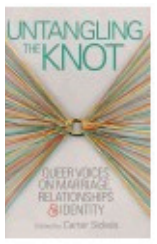
"These are case studies of how a few families were formed in a "deliberately unconventional" way. At the center are two quite different stories of how Gamson (sociology, Univ. of San Francisco) and his husband had two children through donated eggs implanted in surrogate mothers. He recounts the more familiar tales of older women trying increasingly expensive medical assistance to get pregnant, and of single women and lesbian couples trying to adopt internationally. He also tells the stories of families with more unusual complexities--a lesbian couple and a gay couple adopting children internationally, so they can all be parents together, or a lesbian paired with a woman transitioning to a man, who tries to get pregnant, and then adopt, both before and after the latter's gender transition." (From *Choice*)

Before I Do: A Legal Guide to Marriage, Gay and Otherwise by Elizabeth F. Schwartz.



"Schwartz, an attorney with expertise on the rights of LGBT individuals, assembles wide-ranging practical and legal advice for those about to embark on marriage. The author begins with a summary of the journey to secure marriage rights for the LGBT community and then embarks on a measured discussion of issues that couples should consider before tying the knot. Schwartz covers what marriage means, its alternatives, nuptial agreements, finances, estate planning, and divorce. Her clear writing features hypothetical but true-to-life examples that illustrate such topics as the tax benefits of marriage and the complications that can ensue in parental rights when a partner dies or the couple separates. Cameo essays from experts on elder law, taxation, adoption, counseling, and military benefits add meat to an already sturdy book." (From *Library Journal*)

Untangling the Knot: Queer Voices on Marriage, Relationships, and Identity edited by Carter Sickels.



This work "assembles pieces from diverse contributors, college professors and blue-collar workers, some established writers and some never before published. Edited by Carter Sickels (The Evening Hour), these extremely sharp essays . . . cover the reasons why marriage is important to some members of LGBTQ communities, addressing questions of medical decision-making, finances and insurance, child rearing, equality. Others protest what Ben Anderson-Nathe calls a "rhetoric of sameness": the argument for marriage rights based on the idea that queer families are just like straight ones. . . With Sickels's synthesizing introduction, these sympathetic, well-informed essays show that the fight for same-sex marriage is deeply complex and only one issue in the fight for inclusiveness and equality." (From *Shelf Awareness*)

2brides 2be: A Same-Sex Guide for the Modern Bride by Laura Leigh Abby.

"In response to the dearth of guides on same-sex weddings, Abby (2Brides2Be.com) draws from her own experience and that of wedding planners to create a handbook to help women achieve the wedding of their dreams. She covers basics such as putting together a guest list, inviting exes, registering, and establishing a budget, but also takes on issues specific to same-sex couples, including coming out to announce the relationship and deciding who walks first down the aisle. Advice on changing one's name and wording the ceremony pronouncement are other useful additions. Verdict An accomplished book about the meaning of marriage for same-sex couples and how to represent that in the wedding." (From *Library Journal*)

Art Association of HARRISBURG

Upcoming Events

February 22nd-March 28th:

Wanderlust: A Solo Exhibition by Billy Hicks

- Opening reception February 22nd, 5:00-8:00 pm
- Music by Tresa Paul

March 23rd:

AAH Annual Bal Masque Event: Saints and Sinners

AT THE Hershey Country Club - The Pavillion

March 30th:

Psychic Gallery with William Stillman

- 6:00-8:30 pm
- Tickets: $25 in advance, $30 at the door

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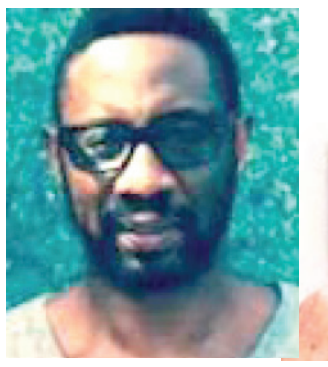
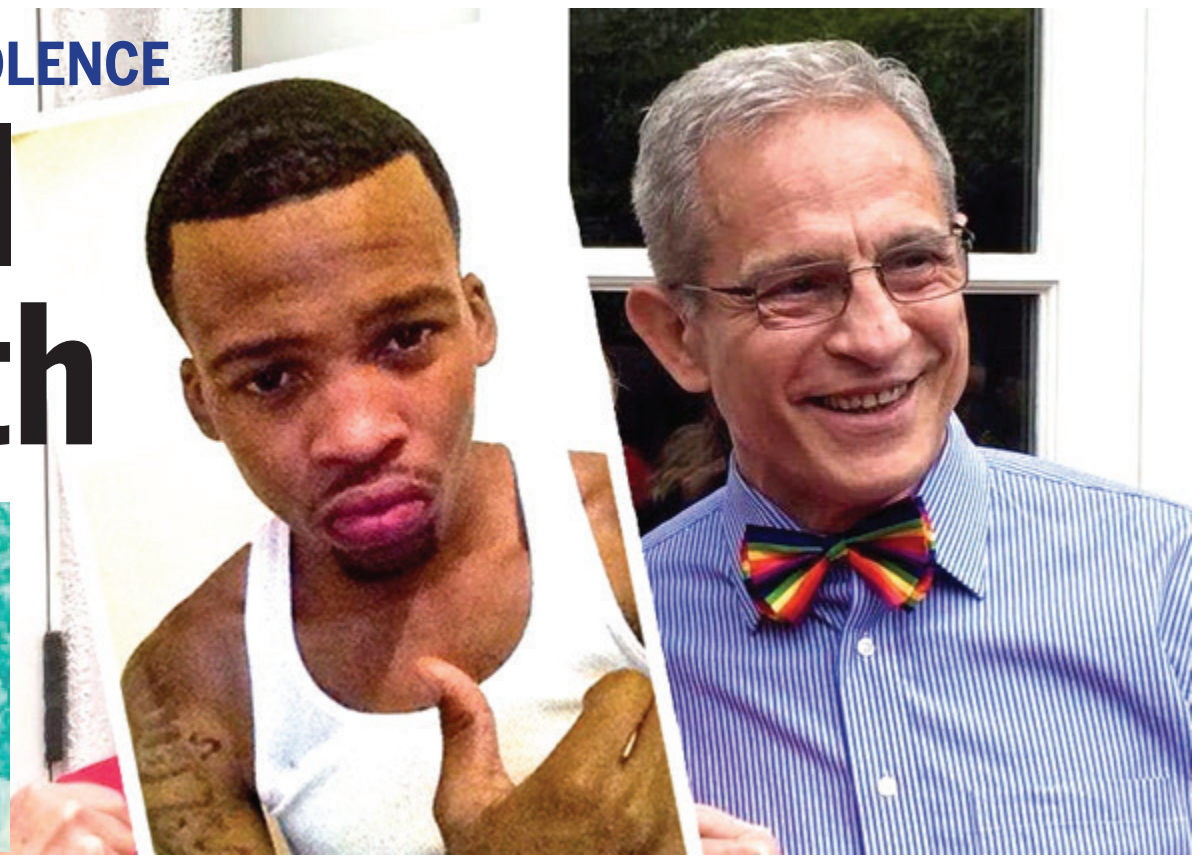
SPEAKING OUT ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Silence still equals death

Another black man died in Ed Buck's apartment





Timothy Dean, 55 and Gemmel Moore, 29, were both found dead in the apartment of Ed Buck, a well-known figure in LGBTQ political circles. Dean died January 2019 and Moore died July 2017 of an accidental drug overdose.

By Louie Marven

Gemmel Moore. Timothy Dean. These are the names of two Black, queer men found dead in a white, gay man's apartment.

I'm an advocate for victims of sexual violence and a white, queer person, and I've seen this story get some traction in some places on my social media feeds. But it hasn't been enough, mainstream media has covered it only minimally, and not enough of us in the queer communities are naming sexual violence as a central issue to what is happening here.

We need to actively name the sexual violence, racism, classism, and homophobia that have conspired here to harm and kill Gemmel Moore and Timothy Dean, and that have so far prevented any accountability through the criminal justice system.

If you're still unfamiliar with the story, this is what has happened:

On August 7, 2017, *WeHo Times* published a breaking report about Gemmel Moore's death and the LA County Coroner's report that it was an accidental overdose.

LaTisha Nixon says she learned that her son, who was unemployed, had recently been doing sex work. She told the *WeHo Times* that her son's friend was also engaged in similar activity—and that they had a client in common.

"When he calmed down, he told me that Ed Buck was one of my son's clients and that Ed Buck was one of his clients as well," Nixon said. "[Buck] would have my son to go out to… Santa Monica Boulevard looking for young gay Black guys so he could inject them with drugs, see their reaction and how [they] would react and take pictures of them."

The lack of traction this was receiving through the criminal justice system did not go over well in the local community. On August 25, the *LA Times* explored ways race and class impacted the investigation:

Moore was 26, Black and poor. He had been homeless and had worked as an escort. Buck was 62, white and wealthy, a well-known figure in LGBTQ political circles.

Now, Moore's family and friends—who have questioned whether the drugs that killed him were self-administered—are wondering whether those differences in race, class and connections factor into how the investigation into his death is being handled.

About a year and a half later, with Buck facing no punishment for Moore's death, another black man was found dead in Buck's apartment. On January 7, 2019, the Advocate reported the developing story Timothy Dean (who hadn't yet been identified) was found dead in Ed Buck's apartment:

Since Moore's death was classified as an accidental overdose, numerous young Black gay men have alleged that Buck has a fetish for shooting drugs into Black men he picks up off the street or on hookup sites. Moore had written about Buck injecting him with dangerous drugs before his death.

On January 11, NBC News published an interview with Jasmyne Cannick, who has consistently covered the story since Gemmel Moore was found dead in Ed Buck's apartment. Transgender activist Ashlee Marie Preston also contributed insight. Cannick and Preston put into context the lack of attention this story was getting in mainstream media, and offered explanations for racism and other factors that have impacted the narrative:

"Our stories aren't told and our lives are seen as expendable. It's very easy to write off someone who dies of a drug overdose who was working as a sex worker, but Gemmel was as much a part of our community as the many other young men like him," said Cannick, who like both Moore and Dean is Black and gay. "It may not be pretty, but white gay men taking advantage of young black men in our community is not unusual—it's just not talked about in mainstream America."

"There's a larger story there that people aren't looking at, Preston said. "It's really about money, power, chem-sex culture, and raceplay, and it's this underground thing that many people aren't talking about, and essentially it's murder rebranded."

There are a lot of sexual violence topics at play in Moore's and Dean's stories: racism and sexual violence, classism and sexual violence, abuse and hookup apps, the vulnerability of sex workers, issues of housing and sexual violence, addiction and sexual violence, and more. We need to know and remember the names Gemmel Moore and Timothy Dean. We also need to know that their stories are not isolated incidents.

Queer fam, it can be uncomfortable to take a look into our own communities and acknowledge where sexual violence is going unchecked. How can it be that we've found safety and liberation where some of us find abuse and exploitation? Part of the discomfort in addressing violence in our communities comes from the harm we've endured from the big lie that our queerness is bad. It isn't, but sexual violence is part of every community, including ours. Young, poor, Black, gay men are dying, and so are others on the margins of LGBTQ communities.

OUT & ABOUT:

LGBT Center Board recognizes Shaashawn Dial

The LGBT Center of Central PA Board of Directors recently recognized Shaashawn Dial with a special award for her six years of service on the center board, one of which included serving as president. The award acknowledged Dial's "commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ equity and inclusion," said a center email from Amanda Arbour, executive director. "As we continue our work on racial justice and centering the voices of the most marginalized, we recognize Shaashawn's leadership as one of the driving forces that has brought us to where we are today,"

Keystone Business Alliance honors Cory Messinger

Cory Messinger was honored for his service to the Keystone Business Alliance at the organization's Jan. 25 Annual Dinner. He served on the Alliance's board of directors and chaired the organization's Executive Committee. "I've loved serving the organization for the last five years. The board, the networking, and committee work was rewarding. It's now time to move on and make room for others to lead," Messinger told The Central Voice, Media Sponsor for the event. KBA began 2019 with their first awards presentations and the highest attendance ever – 135 - at their annual dinner.

UNSAFE SEX

HIV/Aids: China reports 14% surge in new cases

More than 820,000 people are affected in the country, health officials say. About 40,000 new cases were reported in the second quarter of 2018 alone.

The vast majority of new cases were transmitted through sex, marking a change from the past.

Traditionally, HIV spread rapidly through some parts of China as a result of infected blood transfusions.

But the number of people contracting HIV in this way had been reduced to almost zero, Chinese health officials said at a conference in Yunnan province.

Year-on-year, however, the number of those living with HIV and Aids in China has risen by 100,000 people.

HIV transmission through sex is an acute issue in China's LGBT community.

Homosexuality was decriminalised in China in 1997, but discrimination against LGBT people is said to be rife. Because of the country's conservative values, studies have estimated that 70-90% of men who have sex with men will eventually marry women.

Many of the transmissions of the diseases come from inadequate sexual protections in these relationships. Since 2003, China's government has promised universal access to HIV medication as part of an effort to tackle the issue.

INAUGURAL AWARDS FINAL

Keystone Business Alliance names 2019 award winners at annual dinner

KEYSTONE BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Central PA's LGBT Chamber of Commerce

Keystone Business Alliance began 2019 with their first awards presentations and the highest attendance ever – 135 - at their annual dinner.

Todd Snovel, Advocate of the Year

Keystone Business Alliance presents their first-ever Advocate of the Year Award to Todd Snovel, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, at our 2019 Annual Dinner. Todd was appointed by Governor Tom Wolf to serve as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's inaugural executive director of the newly-created Commission for LGBTQ Affairs in July of 2018. Prior to that time, Todd served as assistant dean at Lebanon Valley College leading campus-wide efforts in diversity and inclusion and teaching college level courses on the topics of genders, sexualities, and identity development.

Jodi Christman, Certified Supplier of the Year

Keystone Business Alliance presents their first Certified Supplier of the Year Award to Jodi Christman of Christman Consulting at our Annual Dinner on January 25. Christman Consulting has been a certified LGBT Business Enterprise since 2017, and in 2018 led Keystone Business Alliance's successful rebranding project. The firm brings strategic thinking and smart execution to marketing and technology challenges, and works with small businesses, associations, nonprofits, marketing agencies, government agencies and corporations with traditional marketing and digital solutions. With a strong sense of direction in the physical and digital world, Christman Consulting helps companies navigate technical and marketing options to ensure implementation of the right approach, message, usability and functionality.

Members 1st Federal Credit Union, Corporate Partner of the Year

Keystone Business Alliance awards their first Corporate Partner of the Year at the Annual Dinner on January 25. Members 1st Federal Credit Union, the recipient of this award, has been a member of our organization since its founding, and has shown continued and deepened commitment to LGBT equality in business. Keystone Business Alliance and Members 1st share important values like ethics, respect, and community involvement, and strive to enrich our communities in central Pennsylvania.

Joanne M. Carroll, Member of the Year

Joanne M. Carroll is the President of TransCentralPA; an organization committed to providing advocacy and caring support for transgender individuals, their significant others, families, friends and allies. TransCentralPA also provides gender education and information to businesses, organizations, educational institutions and governmental agencies. She has been a member since 2001. On August 6, 2018, she was appointed by the Governor, and was sworn in as a Commissioner on the Pennsylvania LGBTQ Affairs Commission. She is also the Past President and Past Vice President of EqualityPA, and serves as a member of the Governor's LGBT Working Group, the Millersville University - President's Commission on Gender and Sexual Diversity, and is a past member of the PA Medical Society LGBT Health Disparities Task Force, as well as a past member of the PA LGBT Leadership Council. She is currently a member of the Transgender American Veterans Association and is a Co-Chair of the Keystone Conference, "A Celebration of Gender Diversity". She is an active member of the Penn Central Conference - United Church of Christ - Open and Affirming Ministry Team, and is the Past Vice-President of the Leadership Team of First Reformed United Church of Christ in Lancaster. She is also in the process of becoming an Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ.

Keystone Business Alliance member, The Central Voice, was Media Sponsor for this event. KBA is an LGBT chamber of commerece that connects businesses to regional and national opportunities and certification. An affiliate of NGLCC – National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, KBA is the business voice of the LGBT community, serving eight counties in South Central Pennsylvania. Since founding in 2007 as the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, KBA has linked local businesses, professionals, and not-for-profits to opportunities to fulfill their missions and expand their networks through connections with the LGBT and allied business community.

LGBT Center Central PA History Project

History, Art & Archives

The LGBT Center is excited to be part of a collaborative effort with the PA LGBT History Network to produce and circulate The Long Road to LGBTQ+ Equality in Pennsylvania, a traveling history exhibit that chronicles the efforts that activists have undertaken in Pennsylvania to achieve equality for LGBT people.

With the lack of success in passing statewide non-discrimination protections in housing, employment, public accommodations, and education, activists have been working for more than five decades to obtain these protections one battle at a time, one municipality at a time. The exhibit uses case studies of several cities and townships to highlight not just the political struggles, but the personal stories too.

Four copies of this exhibit will travel throughout Pennsylvania beginning in mid-February 2019, in honor of the 50th anniversary year of Stonewall. *centralpalgbtcenter.org/thelongroad*

Art

Are you an artist? In recognition of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall this year, the LGBT History Project is partnering with the local art community to engage artists in reflecting upon this legacy.

Susquehanna Art Museum's 2019 juried exhibition, Inspired: Contemporary Responses to A Legacy of Courage, is a unique call for entries connecting artists with archives in partnership with LGBT Center of Central PA and Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections. To make submission accessible to all and encourage the opportunity for close investigation of the LGBT History Project collection, the entry fee is waived for Inspired. The deadline for submissions is April 4, 2019, and selected items will be exhibited from May 10 to August 18, 2019.

Find the full call for entries at: *SusquehannaArtMuseum.org/Galleries/Inspired*

The Art Association of Harrisburg proudly announces Hope, Memory & Pride: Artists View Equality, a juried show in collaboration with the LGBT Center of Central PA, honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Inn uprising in NYC. Artist members of the AAH are encouraged and welcomed to express their support of the LGBTQ+ community by creating a work of art inspired by the LGBT Center of Central PA's History Project collection, housed at the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections in Carlisle. Call for Entries will begin on July 15, 2019 and end on September 1, 2019. Entries will be juried by AAH Curator, Rachel O'Connor. Hope, Memory & Pride will be on display from October 18 through November 21, 2019.

Health & Wellness | Men

At what age does a gay man give up looking for love and resign to being single forever?

By David Hudson

"I'm 52 and I'm single and on some level I feel like I've failed because by the time you're my age, you really should be settled."

So said British TV host Graham Norton to the *Daily Mail* this week in an interview in which he suggested that he had resigned himself to being without a partner for the rest of his life.

'I've reached the point that when people ask, "Are you single at the moment?" I say, "Come on, you can drop the 'at the moment'. I'm single forever."'

Norton's words struck a chord with me, because – at the age of 46 – I too have wondered whether I am resigned to being single forever. Once you've reached a certain age and still seem no nearer to tying the knot, one does begin to wonder.

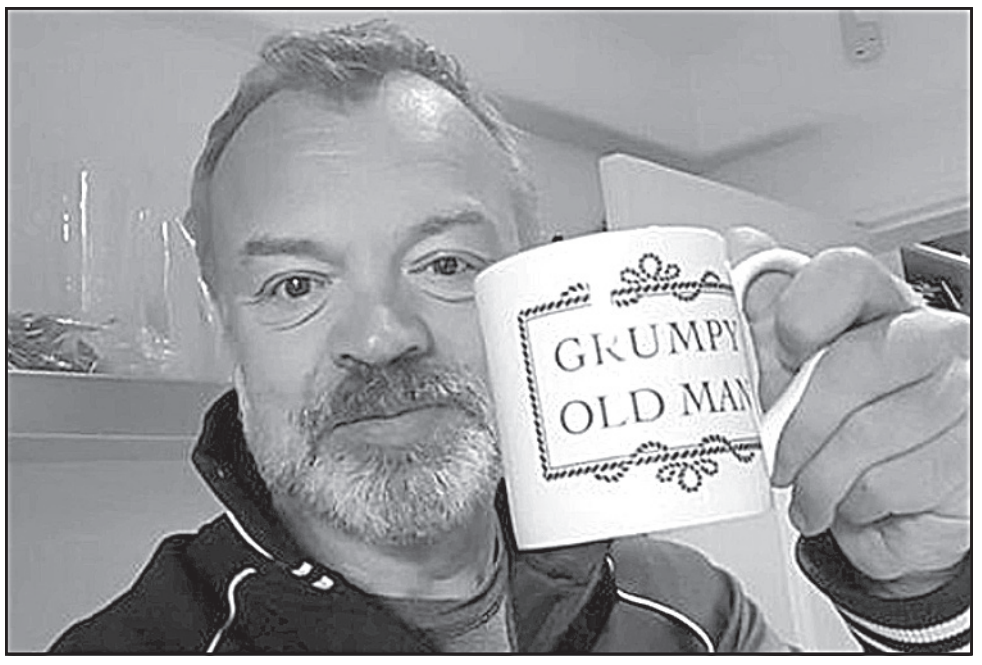
It's not that I've never been in relationships; I've been in plenty. In fact, there have probably been around a dozen boyfriends over the last 28 years, with periods of singledom between each one. My longest relationship was just over four years.

But I'm not getting any younger. And like an X Factor contestant who has just been shot down by Simon Cowell, it's hard not to wonder sometimes whether one should actually be chasing a different dream.

I don't feel it with a sense of panic, or last-minute desperation, but simply nonchalant resignation that perhaps it won't happen for me.

'There's someone out there for everybody', is an oft-repeated mantra of consolation. However, if that were true, everyone would eventually wind up in a relationship, right?

But they don't. And it's that eventual realization that perhaps leads some people – myself included – to simply give up on the whole idea.



British TV host Graham Norton says he's given up on the idea of a long-term partner

- TWITTER

I also don't believe it's simply a matter of luck. If one can pass through 30 years of adult life without finding a long-term partner – whilst living in a major metropolis – then there are usually reasons besides simply chance at not finding 'the one'.

Norton ponders whether it's because he has been a workaholic who has always put his career first.

Any analysis of one's shortcomings is never a bad thing if it leads to beneficial change. In his seminal book, The Velvet Rage, writer Alan Downs touches upon how gay men often seek fame, success and recognition to compensate for a lack of self-esteem – having grown-up in a world which tells them a fundamental part of their character is shameful.

Others may have been scarred by previous brushes with love. Sometimes, the temptation to place one's heart in cold storage is strong.

Been there. Tried it. Got hurt.

The motivation to once again climb aboard that particular emotional merry-

Please see **SINGLE FOREVER**, page **18**

Health & Wellness | Women

Health issues for lesbians and women who have sex with women

By Mayo Clinic Staff

All women face certain health risks. However, sexual minority women, such as those who identify as lesbian or bisexual as well as women who have sex with women, have some specific health concerns.

Although your individual risks are shaped by many factors beyond your sexual orientation and practices — including family history and age — it's important to understand common health issues for sexual minority women and steps you can take to stay healthy.

Safeguard your mental health

Sexual minority women are at higher risk of depression and anxiety. Contributing factors include social alienation, discrimination, rejection by loved ones, abuse and violence. The problem might be more severe for sexual minority women who are not "out" to others and those who lack social support.

If you think you might be depressed, talk to your doctor or seek help from a mental health provider. If you're reluctant to seek treatment, confide in a trusted friend or loved one. Sharing your feelings might be the first step toward getting treatment.

Protect yourself from sexually transmitted infections

Certain sexually transmitted infections — such as human papillomavirus (HPV), bacterial vaginosis and trichomoniasis — can spread between women. Oral sex and sexual behavior involving digital-vaginal or digital-anal contact, particularly with shared penetrative sex toys, can spread infections as well.

Female sexual contact is also a possible means of contracting HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. There's no cure for HIV/AIDS and many sexually transmitted infections, such as HPV and genital herpes. The best way to stay healthy is to practice safer sex.

To protect yourself from sexually transmitted infections:

Get tested and have your partner tested. Don't have unprotected sex unless you›re certain you and your partner aren›t infected with HIV or other sexually transmitted infections — whether you have sex with a man or a woman. Testing is important because many people don't know they're infected, and others might not be honest about their health.

Practice safer sex. During oral sex, use a small piece of latex (dental dam) or latex barrier. Wash sex toys with hot soapy water between uses or cover them with a fresh condom. During digital vaginal or anal penetration, consider using a latex glove.

Be monogamous. Another reliable way to avoid sexually transmitted infections is to stay in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who isn't infected.

Limit the amount of alcohol you drink, and don't use drugs. If you're under the influence, you›re more likely to take sexual risks. If you choose to use injectable drugs, don›t share needles.

Get vaccinated. Vaccinations can protect you from hepatitis A and hepatitis B, serious liver infections that can spread through sexual contact. The HPV vaccine is available to women up to age 26.

Seek help for substance abuse

Sexual minority women report higher rates of tobacco use and alcohol and drug dependence.

If you have a substance abuse concern, remember that help is available. Local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender health, mental health or community centers often provide substance abuse treatment. Organizations such as GLMA also might provide referrals.

Recognize domestic violence

Please see **SEX WITH WOMEN,** page **18**

Nearly 2% of high schoolers are transgender

The Centers for Disease Control has released a groundbreaking report on trans youth.

Nearly two percent of high school students identify as transgender, according to a new report released by the Centers for Disease Control reports Daniel Reynolds for The Advocate.

The groundbreaking study, released Thursday, showed that trans youth exist in greater numbers than previously thought. However, it also highlighted the health risks that these students face.

Around 27 percent of trans students feel unsafe going to school, 35 percent are bullied, and 35 percent have attempted suicide within the past year. Compared with their cisgender peers, trans young people were also more likely to report being victims of violence, struggle with substance abuse, and receive an HIV test.

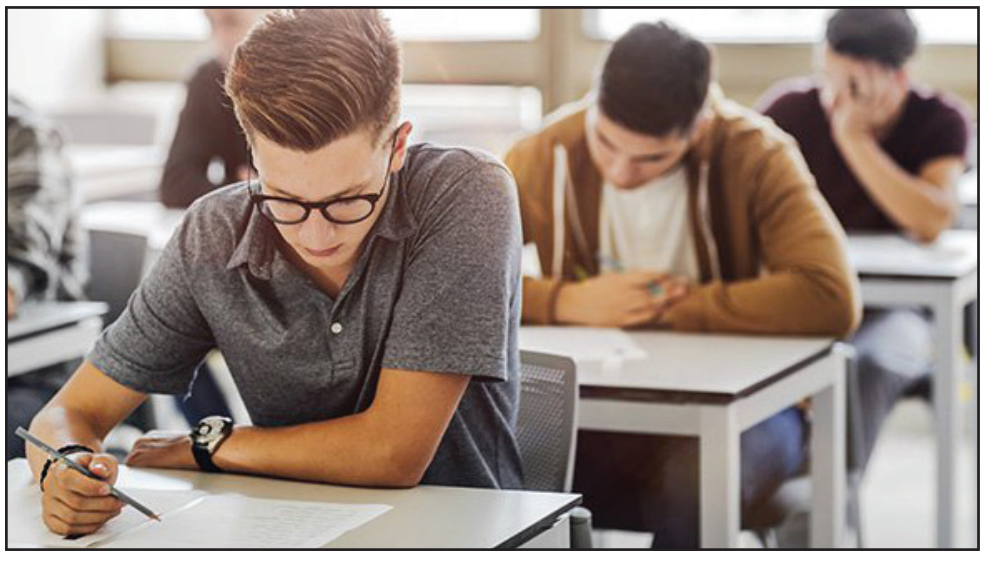
The findings are from the CDC's 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Study, which for the first time polled for transgender identity in 19 sites. These sites included 10 states (Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin) and nine school districts in major urban areas (Boston, Broward County, Cleveland, Detroit, District of Columbia, Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego, and San Francisco).

The pilot question asked students, "Some people describe themselves as transgender when their sex at birth does not match the way they think or feel about their gender. Are you transgender?" Response options included, "A. No, I am not transgender; B. Yes, I am transgender; C. I am not sure if I am transgender; D. I do not know what this question is asking." Overall, 1.8 percent of respondents selected B.

Amit Paley — CEO of the Trevor Project, a nonprofit that provides resources to LGBTQ youth at risk for suicide — praised the inclusion of transgender youth in this important federal survey.

"By collecting data inclusive of gender identity, the report shows the very real health risks faced by transgender and gender non-conforming youth," Paley said in a statement. "The CDC's findings highlight the need for even more policies to protect transgender and gender non-conforming youth, as well as additional support for LGBTQ-affirming organizations like the Trevor Project."

However, Paley stressed that this survey was still "incomplete," because it was limited to only 10 states and 9 urban areas. He encouraged the CDC to expand its scope in future surveys in order to educate policymakers on the needs of this vulnerable community. "Only by understanding who our youth are and how they identify can we craft policies to allow every young person to thrive," Paley said.



The Trump administration has actively worked to undermine and erase transgender people on a federal level. One of the first actions of its education department, led by billionaire Betsy DeVos, was to revoke Obama-era guidelines that urged public schools allow trans students use of facilities that align with their gender identities. An option to identify as LGBTQ was also removed from the 2020 U.S. Census.

Moreover, the conservative-majority Supreme Court announced a 5-4 decision on Monday to lift injunctions on Donald Trump's 2017 ban on transgender service members. The ban raises many alarms, including whether the federal government will continue to recognize transgender people and the health care they require.

If you are a trans or gender-non-conforming person considering suicide Trans Lifeline can be reached at (877) 565-8860. LGBTQ youth (ages 24 and younger) can reach the Trevor Project Lifeline at (866) 488-7386. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255 can also be reached 24 hours a day by people of all ages and identities.

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go-round is simply absent.

At least, so I have been guilty of believing.

Maybe the advent of same-sex marriage has brought the issue to the fore. It's fantastic that same-sex couples can now get married in many countries, and I'm hugely happy for all the people I know who have taken advantage of this fact.

In fact, I'm actually in awe of them. The notion of getting married has seemed to me about as remote as winning the Lottery; a wonderful thing that may happen one day but not something I'm holding my breath for.

I look upon couples I know who have been together 10, 15, 20 years with something approaching wonderment; do they always appreciate how valuable and precious a commodity they hold?

So, like Norton, I too had resigned myself to the fact that perpetual singlehood may be my default setting.

And then a few weeks ago I read a business book and was taken by a line. It quoted a 2014 book by Nancy Kline, in which she had written letters to a young god-daughter on how to find happiness in life.

'Love is the text; all the rest is the footnote.'

Love is an antidote to all the bad stuff that life throws at you. Love brings happiness; comfort; safety. Love eliminates fear. Everything else pales in comparison. Success and money can't compete.

I don't know why exactly, but it struck me far harder than I was expecting. Perhaps because it was a surprise to find it tucked away at the end of a book about succeeding in business.

Or then again, maybe it just touched a deeper nerve within me – something that I had known but previously denied: You can live a full and happy life without a significant other but to determinedly turn your back on the option of love is to sell yourself short.

Yes, it sucks that the gay scene places such high value on muscles and youthful beauty and it's little surprise that those who are older decide they can't compete. And looking for love can be a frustrating and painful experience; rejection hurts. Sometimes it feels easier to resign one's self to being alone.

But what a prize to turn one's back upon.

In August, the celebrated neurologist Oliver Sacks died at the age of 82. Sacks realized he was gay as a teenager, but remained firmly in the closet. He was purposefully celibate for 35 years but found love late in life – meeting his partner, the writer Bill Hayes, when he was in his mid-70s. They were together until Sacks' death.

Last month, a 96-year-old WWII veteran, John Banvard, married his partner Gerard Nadeau, age 67. The two have been together for two decades and married at the senior living facility in San Diego where they have lived for the past three years.

I may not be running around town looking for it – as I was in my 20s – but I've decided that I've not given up on love. My heart will remain open. I may indeed never marry, and am unlikely to ever celebrate a ruby wedding anniversary, but love is not the preserve of any age group.

The only sell-by date is the one you impose upon yourself.

SEX WITH WOMEN from page 16

Domestic violence can affect anyone in an intimate relationship. Sexual minority women might be more likely to stay silent about this kind of violence due to:

Threats from the batterer to "out" you by telling friends, loved ones, colleagues or community members your sexual orientation

Fear of discrimination

Staying in an abusive relationship might leave you depressed, anxious and hopeless. If you don't want to disclose your same-sex relationship or sexual identity, you might be less likely to seek help after an assault.

Still, the only way to break the cycle of domestic violence is to take action — the sooner the better. If you're a target of domestic violence, tell someone about the abuse, whether it's a friend, loved one, health care provider or other close contact.

Consider calling a domestic violence hotline and creating a plan to leave your abuser.

Make routine health care a priority

Some sexual minority women struggle to find a doctor knowledgeable about their specific health issues and with whom they feel comfortable discussing their needs and concerns. The GLMA website is one place to find referrals for doctors.

Look for a doctor who is curious, empathic and respectful of your specific needs. Share your sexual orientation with your provider, and ask about routine screenings recommended for women in your age group — such as blood pressure and cholesterol measurements and screenings for breast cancer and cervical cancer.

If you're not in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship, schedule regular screenings for sexually transmitted infections. Share any other health concerns you might have with your doctor as well. Early diagnosis and treatment help promote long-term health.

3 steps to guaranteed success

Making Sense of Life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Are you successful? You might ask, "At what?" We can feel accomplished or successful in one area of life, but not others. Some people seem to have relationships down pat but struggle with financial issues. Someone else might be very comfortable financially but be plagued with health issues. Yet another person could be healthy physically but be alone and depressed.

What defines success in your life? One way to address this question is through a term we hear in the sports world: personal best. It's often used in sporting events to indicate when an athlete has surpassed their own previous record.

Unfortunately, the way success is determined off the field, slope, or ice can be considerably less obvious. Our relationships and careers, for example, are not judged to the millisecond by a panel of impartial judges. We don't come home from a date to find five people in our living room with score cards.

So how do we find a personal best in the various areas of our lives? Is there a guru to instruct us? Probably not. But there are three steps we can take.

The first step is preparatory. Our success in any venture will have a greater outcome of satisfaction if we are focused and dedicated to the outcome. No Olympiad is medaled because she casually thought she'd take up a sport because there wasn't anything better to do.

That's why we can accomplish a goal and still feel empty, lacking the satisfaction we expected. We feel like failed at something we didn't desire in the first place. We must pursue the goals we desire for ourselves, not what others tell us we should do. The universe will support our word so it behooves us to ensure that our thoughts and words will lead to the actions necessary to produce the results we crave. Who wants to have a ho-hum response to an optional undertaking?

Second is to (A) let go of the process, and (B) get busy with our work. That may seem contradictory, but it's not. Once we firm decision on what we want the universe acts on it, provided we don't get into the process and muck it up. This isn't metaphysical psychobabble. Countless studies have been done at major, accredited universities proving that how firm our beliefs are in what we want, the better our chances are of seeing our efforts rewarded with the success we seek.

The busy part is doing the work we are drawn to do. In other words, we can't put the new frig in the kitchen without removing the old one. Get rid of whatever is in the way of the desired result. If we need to have a degree or certification for a job, then at least go on a couple of school websites and start some research.

If you don't know what that next step is, find something to clean. Cleaning our desk, closets, car, garage, or whatever else we can think of is an excellent way to both signal to the universe that we're serious, plus it keeps us occupied while our desire is simmering.

Finally, the third step has to do with judgment. When people feel they have failed at being a success it may be because they have used the wrong measurements. It's easy to have the exact result we set out to achieve, yet find it falls short of the goals of other people or society. The judgment step is about us deciding what is success for us, our personal best. We can't allow our friends, parents, society, or even our partners determine what is best for us. It's up to us.

Decide today to take just one desire you have and use these steps to find the success you seek. When you've reached your goal, you'll know you've reached your personal best. How? You'll have a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. It will be the ease with which you fall asleep at night, and the excitement for the new day with which you awaken. Go for it!

Terry is speaker and award-winning author - find his books on Amazon. Read his weekly blog at Central Voice online or on his website at: blog.terrydrewkaranen.com

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Identity politics is 'all we have'

Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons

The center right and far right continue to decry identity politics. Take Fox News' Tucker Carlson, who recently declared, "Identity politics will destroy this country faster than a foreign invasion." He apparently sees identity politics as a way of saying that "some groups are inherently inferior to other groups, and as a result, people will "start hating each other."

Phew! That may be really over the top, but there are many Americans who agree with Carlson. They believe any political strategy focusing on different identity groups based on socioeconomic, class, race, gender identity, sexual orientation and others is a bad, bad, thing.

We've been arguing about identity politics for at least four decades now. And in the Trump era, the voices have become even louder. It's been hard for us progressives to watch as the current administration systematically destroy so many of the gains of the past decade or so.

It has been especially hard to hear those on the right decry identity politics while they are busy engaging in white, heteronormative identity politics of their own.

It has been especially hard to hear those on the right decry identity politics while they are busy engaging in white, heteronormative identity politics of their own. Of course, they don't see it that way. They say they are advocating for the American people as they roll back the rights gained by the LGBTQ communities and anyone else isn't like them. And they want to return to some sort of good old days when everybody was happy with the status quo. Yes, back when America was great.

However, too many of our progressive allies believe the same thing. Remember all those Bernie Bros and college-educated white women who voted for Trump?

What should we do when those big sticking points for the left who advocate for identity politics is also about class? Writing in The Nation, social-justice journalist Carla Murphy said that getting a Democrat elected president just doesn't motivate her. "What does is concern for what will happen to poor and working-class people of color should a major crisis occur under Trump." Her column appeared in December 2016, so we now know just what has happened to that segment and so many others.

We do have a problem here. Any discussion of how identity politics can be successful has to face the fact that our American capitalist system needs to change if we are to live up to our country's ideal of equality for all. And changing that is a tall order indeed.

In his book The Third Reconstruction, The Reverend Dr. William J. Barber II has modeled how such change can happen. In his book's subtitle, How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear, he describes how he was able to bring together a broad coalition in 2013 that demonstrated on what came to be called Moral Mondays at the North Carolina capitol in Raleigh. Thousands of people and scores of organizations turned out and had a major impact on North Carolina's restrictive voting rights

The demonstrations of civil disobedience in North Carolina then spread to Georgia, South Carolina and beyond. Although the media has moved on to other matters, the movement is still very much alive today. How this came about is the subject of his book.

Barber practices what he calls fusion politics. His movement came from his travels around North Carolina in 2007 where he found himself making as list of some 14 "justice tribes" in the state. These consisted of people who cared about better schools and others who were calling for better health care. The list included those calling for an end to discrimination in hiring; people opposed to the death penalty; environmental justice advocates; people calling for immigrant justice; voting rights advocates and so on.

"We weren't advocating for left or right, but for all that is good and right," he continued. It took a while for things to come together. He reminds us of a quote attributed to Matahai Ghandi: "First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win."

You might want to read The Third Reconstruction just for the way the author brings out the history of Reconstruction after the Civil War, and then describes the civil rights movement of the 1960s as The Second Reconstruction. In both cases he shows how broad coalitions brought true change to our country.

Identity politics is a complex and difficult matter. Talking about it and what it means in 2019 requires careful thought, not emotional knee-jerk reactions when you come across something so outrageous you just can't abide it.

Serious discourse in 2019 is often hard to come by. We have been here before, as in the late 1960s, but this still feels different. We seem to have entered a truly Orwellian time, especially when it comes to the debasement of language and the rise of in-your-face propaganda.

I can hear old George Orwell now calling from his grave: "I knew this would happen. I told you so."

LGBT Center of Central PA releases strategic plan

LGBT Center of Central PA

By Amanda Arbour

It's a New Year, and I have some exciting news to share with you! Last year, we commenced a visioning and strategic planning process to find out what our LGBTQ+ communities' needs were so that we could identify priorities for the center going forward. Many of you participated in this, as community feedback was collected through multiple focus groups and an online survey.

We were pleased with the amount of feedback that we received, and the data was compiled and analyzed for themes. And now we present the new Vision, Mission, and Values and the new Strategic Plan for 2019-2021.

We believe that our new Vision, Mission, and Values provide a clear statement on who we are as an organization and what we value, and our new Strategic Plan establishes priorities and sets out a trajectory to direct our work over the next three years. I'd like to share these with you!

Our Vision as an organization is aspirational - what we hope for in the long-term, and seek to move towards intentionally. Based on community feedback, the LGBT Center's new vision statement is: "To inspire LGBTQ+ people across identities for collective liberation." Liberation from all forms of oppression is what we strive for, and creating spaces where we can bring together LGBTQ+ people of all different identities to be inspired and to work towards that is where we situate ourselves within the broader LGBTQ+ movement.

We also recognize how interconnected our work in the LGBTQ+ movement must be with other social justice movements, and we unapologetically support movements seeking justice and inclusion for people of color, documented and undocumented immigrants, refugees, people of all faiths or no faith, women, people living with disabilities, older adults, youth, and people who are low-income. We know that each of these struggles, although unique, are interconnected - and we support justice for all people who are oppressed and marginalized.

Our Mission is functional - what we are doing on a day-to-day basis to move towards our Vision. Based on community feedback, the LGBT Center's new mission statement is: "To foster inclusive communities and holistic well-being for LGBTQ+ people through social, educational, and cultural engagement." This speaks to the core of what we do as a Center through our ongoing programs like Common Roads, Aging with Pride, Passageways, and the QTPOC Advisory Group - as well as training and education, and community events.

Our Values are the principles that guide us as an organization as we do our day-to-day work - what informs us when we are navigating difficult decisions or weighing competing priorities. Based on community feedback, the LGBT Center has identified four core values: Safety, Respect & Dignity, Intersectionality & Inclusion, and Collaboration.

Our value of Safety means that we seek to prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional safety of LGBTQ+ people. We believe survivors of violence and seek to support their safety and agency. As LGBTQ+ people, we experience higher rates of sexual violence and many forms of violence - and the systems that are supposed to protect us often don't. So, we believe survivors, we do everything we can to support survivors, and we strive to create spaces at the Center and in our programs that further the safety of all of our participants.

Our value of Respect & Dignity means that we value the humanity in each person, and seek to ground our interactions in respect and dignity for people of all identities and experiences. We bring many different identities and lived experiences to this space - and sometimes that can cause tension or conflict. Knowing that, we strive to create a culture where we can engage our differences honestly, call each other "in" rather than calling each other "out", and treat each other with dignity and respect, even when we disagree.

Our value of Intersectionality & Inclusion means that we recognize the complex ways that our multiple identities intersect, and the layers of societal privilege and oppression that we experience on an individual, communal, organizational, and systemic level as a result. We seek to understand and challenge our privileges and actively work towards solidarity. We strive to center the voices of and prioritize programs and services for LGBTQ+ people who are most marginalized, committing to be representative of and accountable to those communities.

Finally, our value of Collaboration means that we seek to work, internally and externally, in a collaborative manner that values feedback, builds partnerships, and operates from a framework of mutuality rather than competition. We strive to be a place that is responsive to community feedback, that recognizes the value of partnerships and cultivates them, and that does not operate from a place of "not enough" but recognizes how much we can accomplish together.

With this Vision, Mission, and Values to guide us, our Strategic Plan sets out a trajectory for our work over the next three years. Based on community feedback, we identified four Strategic Focus Areas: Community Building, Racial Justice, Mental Health, and Housing.

Under Community Building, our goal is to: "Build connected, engaged, and resilient communities amongst LGBTQ+ people in Central PA." This builds upon the work we are already doing through our regular programming for specific ages and identities, as well as creating spaces for people to connect across and between different identities and ages

Under Racial Justice, our goal is to: "Move towards being an anti-racist organization that prioritizes the needs of queer and trans people of color (QTPOC) in all aspects of the organization, and is representative of, informed by, and accountable to QTPOC." The Queer & Trans People of Color (QTPOC) Advisory Group currently plans QTPOC-specific programming and serves as an advisory group to our Board of Directors - including having a voting member on the Board - to hold us accountable on racial justice.

Under Mental Health, our goal is to: "Enhance the availability and quality of mental health resources for LGBTQ+ people in Central PA." We know that LGBTQ+ people have higher mental health needs, due to the discrimination and oppression we experience in society, and we face additional barriers to accessing affirming mental health services. In addition to continuing to foster connection

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YEAR OF QUEER from page 1

has sponsored an LGBTQ+ young adult program called Spectrum York.

With the intent of creating a safe place for queer individuals between the ages of 21 and 40, Spectrum York meets twice a month to provide an affirming environment to have open discussions and obtain information on local resources for anyone who identifies along the full spectrum of queerness.

Guerilla Gay Bar

One of York's most exciting social gatherings is the volunteer-run Guerilla Gay Bar (GGB York). This pop-up LGBTQ+ bar seeks to "make every space in Downtown York a place of our own" by taking over one of the local venues for one Saturday night a month.

With over 1,200 followers on the Facebook page and between 100-200 attendees at each event, GGB's critical mass methodology makes any space a safe place for queer people to socialize, eat, and drink for a few hours a month while supporting local businesses. With a regular Coffee Edition open to all ages, as well as one-offs such as Ladies Night Out and Trans Night Out, GGB is a great way to find connection and friends in York.

Equality Fest Aug. 4

York's inclusive answer to Pride, Equality Fest is happening again this year for the sixth year in a row. This day-long, family-friendly community celebration held in Downtown York City celebrates diversity across York County. The festival features inspiring speakers, exciting dance, theater, poetry, spoken word, and performance art, as well as live visual art, strolling performers, a fully interactive children's area with games, workshops, and activities, retail vendors, informational and organizational displays, and a variety of international foods. This year's theme is What We Learned at Stonewall and is happening on August 4 at Penn Park. Equality Fest Junior, which is a unique version of Pride focused on queer youth, will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York for the third year on the evening of May 11.

Joining Forces

In response to community voices and requests, Equality Fest is excited to join forces with the IDEAS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Social Change) Center to form the York LGBTQ+ Resource Center. Located in the Weinstein Realty Building off of Cherry Lane Park in the heart of downtown York, the Resource Center will be opening this Spring with regular office hours, a lending library and gallery, a York LGBTQ+ history project, regular trainings and information sessions open to the community, and fully equipped meeting spaces for outside small groups.

Electoral Politics

One of the most exciting announcements coming out of Fall 2018 was that of local LGBTQ+/Latino activist Lou Rivera's run for York City Council. As he ramps up his 2019 campaign to be a voice for ALL of York, he will ensure "that the LGBTQ+ Community is represented and is offered the same opportunities and equal protections afforded to everyone else." He seeks to eradicate discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community and promote representation in the areas of Housing, Economic Development, Leadership positions, and Financial Equity.

While the outside world becomes a darker and scarier place for those that identify as LGBTQ+, York City, through passionate volunteers and exciting programs, is becoming a safer place. We will continue to educate, to advocate for justice and equality, and to facilitate the growth and safety of our queer community.

Mississippi Senate State Sen. Charles Younger,

BOTTOM UP REVOLT from page 1

legislation."

Related to a burgeoning new effort to pass LGBT protections, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) last September issued new "guidance" indicating that it takes the position that employment discrimination based on LGBT status is prohibited by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Guidance is an official statement by a governmental body with oversight and/or enforcement duties. In this instance, the language guides individuals, organizations, employers, other governmental agencies and entities of government in policy making.

Last April, one month before the state's General Election, Governor Tom Wolf and state lawmakers renewed their calls for passage of the PA Fairness Act. Doing so would update the state's non-discrimination law to explicitly include protections for LGBT people from discrimination at work, in housing, and in public places based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In other words, the "guidance" becomes the law of the land. Dozens of Pennsylvania municipalities have passed separate ordinances to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, including Pittsburgh, Lancaster, Carlisle, Erie, Harrisburg, Scranton, and Philadelphia.

Bottom up revolt?

Are the dictatorial House Rules under which Metcalf arbitrarily blocked any advance of LGBT civil rights about to change?

The Pennsylvania Legislature is a GOP-dominated assembly with 110 Republicans and 91 Democrats and two vacancies at present. In a reprise of 2007 failed efforts to change House Rules when Democrats had a narrow majority, four current members have tossed their reform bills into the mix.

Sims says "when you first get here you're told to keep your powder dry. What is really meant is that you should follow leadership." He offers a different way to approach to what those words could or should mean. "It can mean in an empowering way that incoming legislators might pay attention and learn from more experienced colleagues. And then move on their goals and priorities." The bottom line for Sims is that he wants "all of us, including the incoming class, to be active and engaged from day one."

"The bills to reform House Rules introduced by my colleagues are significant. They are an effort to make the House more open to all its members."

Empowering members appears to be the foundation of the four recently introduced bills.

Majority rules

Rep. Steve Samuelson, D-Bethlehem, introduced a requirement that any bill that has a majority of the 203 House members signing on as a co-sponsor gets an automatic final consideration vote on the House floor. Bills would move out of committee in their original form and brought before the full House for debate, where they could be passed, amended or rejected.

Bipartisan cosponsors

A second proposal from Rep. Pam Delissio, D-Philadelphia, would require that any bill with 20 co-sponsors from each party would, at the request of one member from each party, be brought up for a committee vote within three legislative days.

Priority designation

Rep. Melissa Shusterman, a first-term Democrat from Phoenixville in Chester County, would permit each member to designate one piece of legislation as a "priority bill" in each two-year legislative session.

Committee membership

Rep. Joe Webster, a first-term Democrat from Norristown in Montgomery County, called for making committee membership in proportion to the two major parties' overall membership in the House. At present, the rules establish a 60-40 balance of power in favor of the majority party.

"We are at our best when we act as a collaborative body," Sims concludes.

Who is Brian Sims?

Brian Sims, 40, is a Democratic member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in Philadelphia's 182nd district. Elected in 2012, Sims is also a lawyer and activist on LGBT civil rights. Sims is the first openly gay elected state legislator in Pennsylvania history. He won re-election on November 6, 2018.

In June 2013, after the Defense of Marriage Act had been ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, Sims tried to make a speech in the Pennsylvania House supporting the decision. Daryl Metcalfe, who was one of several representatives who blocked Sims from speaking, said: I did not believe that as a member of that body that I should allow someone to make comments such as he was preparing to make that ultimately were just open rebellion against what the word of God has said, what God has said, and just open rebellion against God's law."

Sims currently serves on the Human Services, State Government, Finance, and Game and Fish committees.

PA State Rep. Brian Sims, left, and his partner Brandon McMullin.

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and community through all regular programming, our strategic plan will focus on increasing the capacity of mental health providers to provide LGBTQ-affirming care through training and education, and developing our own capacity to provide LGBTQ-affirming mental health services at the center.

Under Housing, our goal is to: "Improve the availability and quality of housing resources for LGBTQ+ people in Central PA." Up to 40% of unstably housed youth identify as LGBTQ+, and many LGBTQ+ older adults are concerned about being forced back into the closet as they age. We plan to improve access to and quality of existing housing systems for LGBTQ+ people who are unstably housed by providing training and education to providers, as well as creating new systems for providing LGBTQ-specific housing services. We will also be identifying, equipping, and highlighting older adult housing providers that are LGBTQ-affirming.

Reflecting on the establishment of the Center in 2006, this too was driven by a strategic planning group gathering input from the community - with the support of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) - so it seems fitting that we continue in this tradition of gathering community input to assess needs, as we forge our way ahead into 2019.

There are lots of opportunities to be involved as volunteers, donors, sponsors, and partners, so if you are interested in joining us please reach out to me at aarbour@centralpalgbtcenter.org or 717-920-9534. I hope to have the opportunity to work with you as we move forward together!

Tuesdays with Toomey: Why courts matter

In wave of progressive activism taking place during the Trump era, Tuesdays with Toomey has been one local group achieving consistent visibility. Fighting for LGBT issues is among their concerns.

The group identifies, according to their web site, as a "Bipartisan, grassroots group who meets with Sen. Toomey every Tuesday to discuss our concerns." Here's the local lineage of the organization – Tuesdays with Toomey is a group affiliated with Why Courts Matter – PA, which is affiliated with the national progressive research and advocacy organization known as Center for American Progress.

The group that is active locally was started by Philadelphia activists who were frustrated by Sen. Toomey's lack of town hall meetings. In Harrisburg, they've gathered regularly on the steps of the Ronald Reagan Federal Building and Courthouse, and they can be found across the state at Sen. Toomey's offices with local activists and supportive organizations.

Kadida Kenner serves as the campaign director for Why Courts Matter - PA.

One of Why Courts Matter's primary goals is to educate the public on the significance of court vacancies. On the website whycourtsmatterpa.org, they point out that in 2018, "more than 195 million people — over 60 percent of the U.S. population — lived in a community with a federal courtroom vacancy," with Pennsylvania as the state with the second most vacancies. To help quantify the impact this has on Pennsylvanians' access to the courts, "there are nearly 17,000 civil and criminal cases pending in Pennsylvania District Courts, and more than 2,000 cases pending in the Circuit Court."

Why Courts Matter's website includes infographics demonstrating the role of the court system on issues ranging from religious liberties to money in politics to voting rights. While each of these issues is relevant to LGBT people, there is also an LGBT Equality page that emphasizes the role the courts have played in protecting our rights even while legislators have passed discriminatory, harmful laws.

While the recent elevation of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court caught the attention of many communities who see the court as moving in a direction toward harming already vulnerable communities, progressives would be well-served to remember the importance of filling the many vacancies up and down the court systems with qualified judges, who can make decisions that impact our lives in the short and long terms.

Background

Why Courts Matter - PA is a non-partisan, non-profit (c)(3) organization and coalition of more than 40 organizational partners, representing tens of thousands of Pennsylvanians, who work together to educate the public about the importance of filling federal court vacancies with fair, independent, qualified judges of diverse personal and professional backgrounds. INFO: whycourtsmatterpa.org.

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